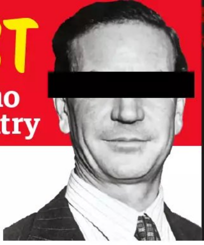
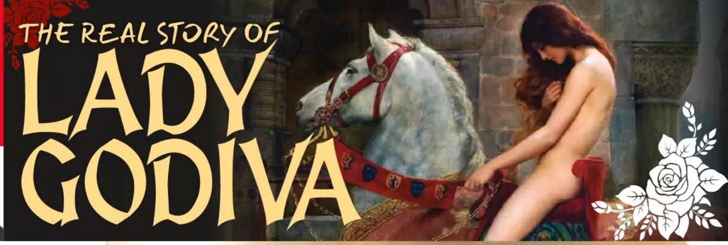
BRITAIN'S BIGGEST TRAITOR Double-agent who sold out his country





THE REAL STORY OF
LADY GODIVA

ALL ABOUT HISTORY

EGYPT'S EMPIRE MAKER

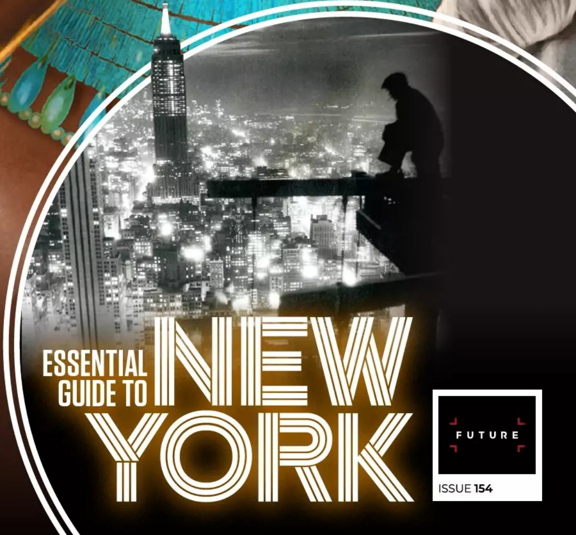
THE FIRST PHARAOH

How Narmer unified two ancient crowns to forge the First Dynasty

DIGGING FOR THE PAST
The evolution of archaeology explained

WAR IN OUR TIME!
What if Hitler hadn't been appeased?

ORIGINS OF KABUKI
From imperial scandals to cultural landmark



ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO NEW YORK

FUTURE
ISSUE 154

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The pharaoh Menes (also believed to be Narmer) depicted next to Hammurabi in the US Supreme Court

Welcome

This issue's cover story is one that takes us back over 5,000 years. Even having studied and written about history for as long as I have, trying to mentally bridge that gap can be a challenge. When attempting to answer the question 'who was the first pharaoh?' we also meet some of the logistical challenges of looking back across such a chasm of time. Who was Narmer? Who was Menes? Were they one and the same?

Ben Gazur is our guide to try and answer these questions and uncover the truth about Egypt's uniting pharaoh who formed the ancient kingdom as it came to be remembered. Also this issue we learn the real story of Lady Godiva, expose Britain's greatest traitor, uncover the origins of kabuki theatre in Japan and examine the evolution of archaeology over the centuries.

This issue we also say farewell to someone who has been a lynchpin of *All About History* since issue one. Joe Cummings has been our cover artist for over a decade, and getting to see his pieces during my tenure here has been a constant delight. His contribution to this magazine cannot be overstated, so from all of us I want to express our deepest thanks and appreciation. Best of luck, Joe.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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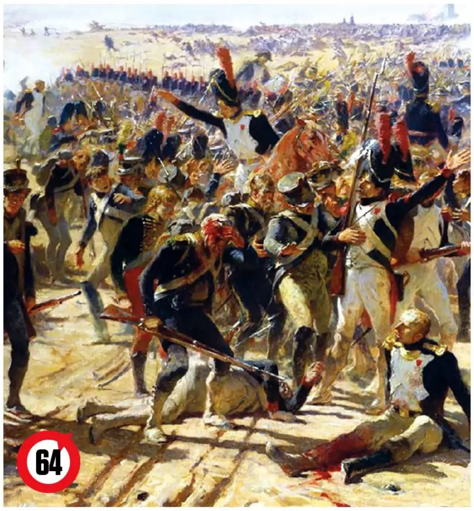

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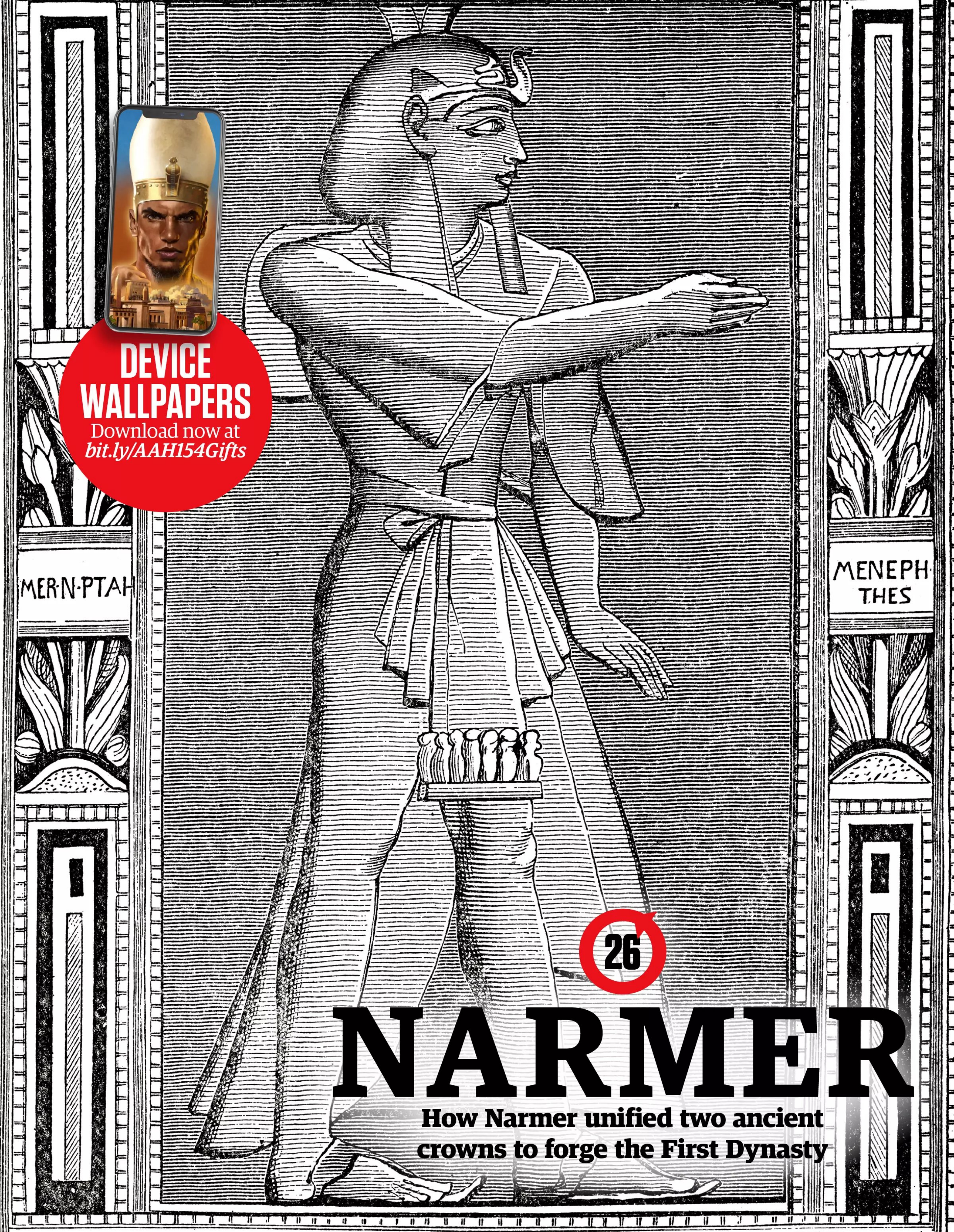
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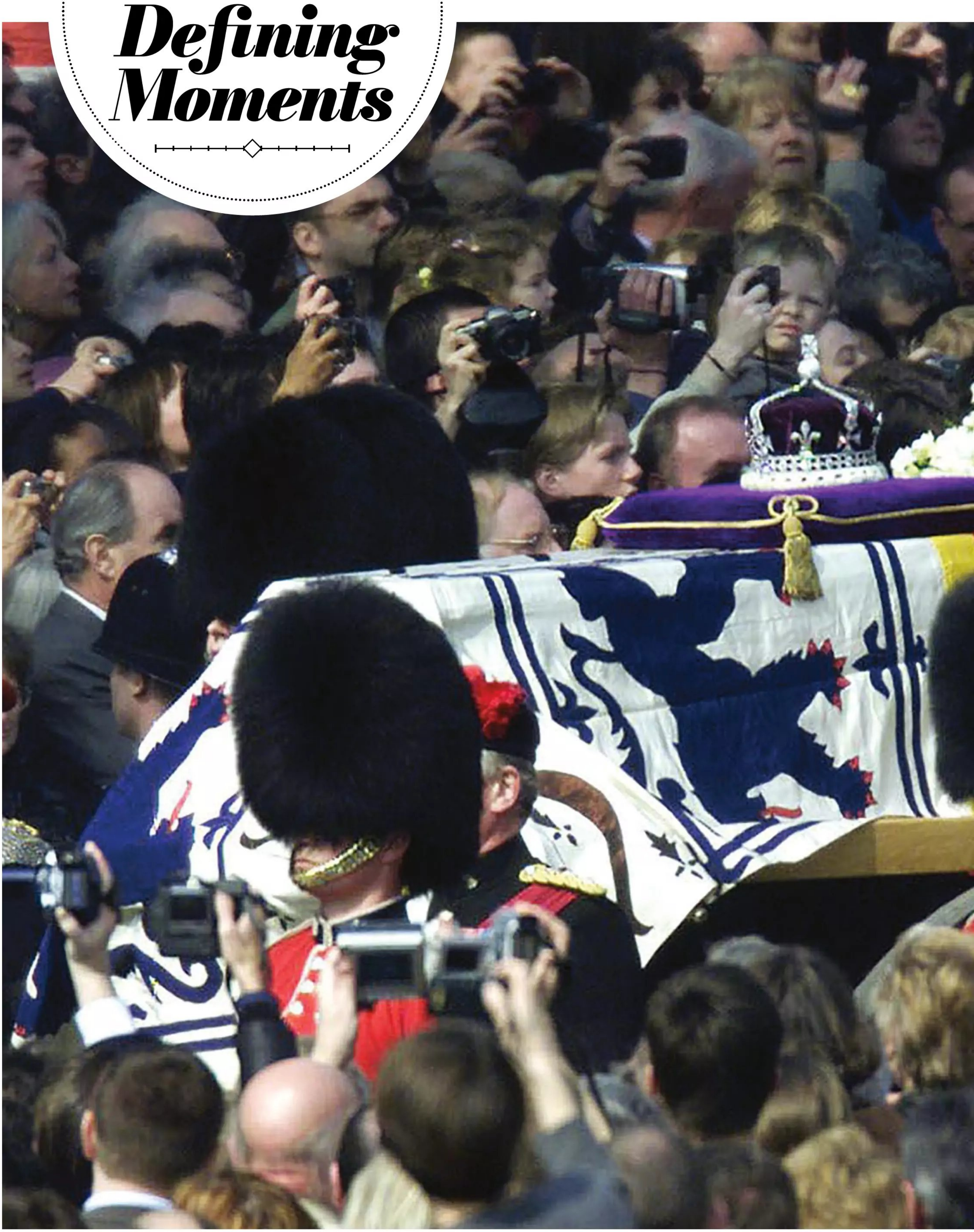
How Narmer unified two ancient crowns to forge the First Dynasty

Defining Moments



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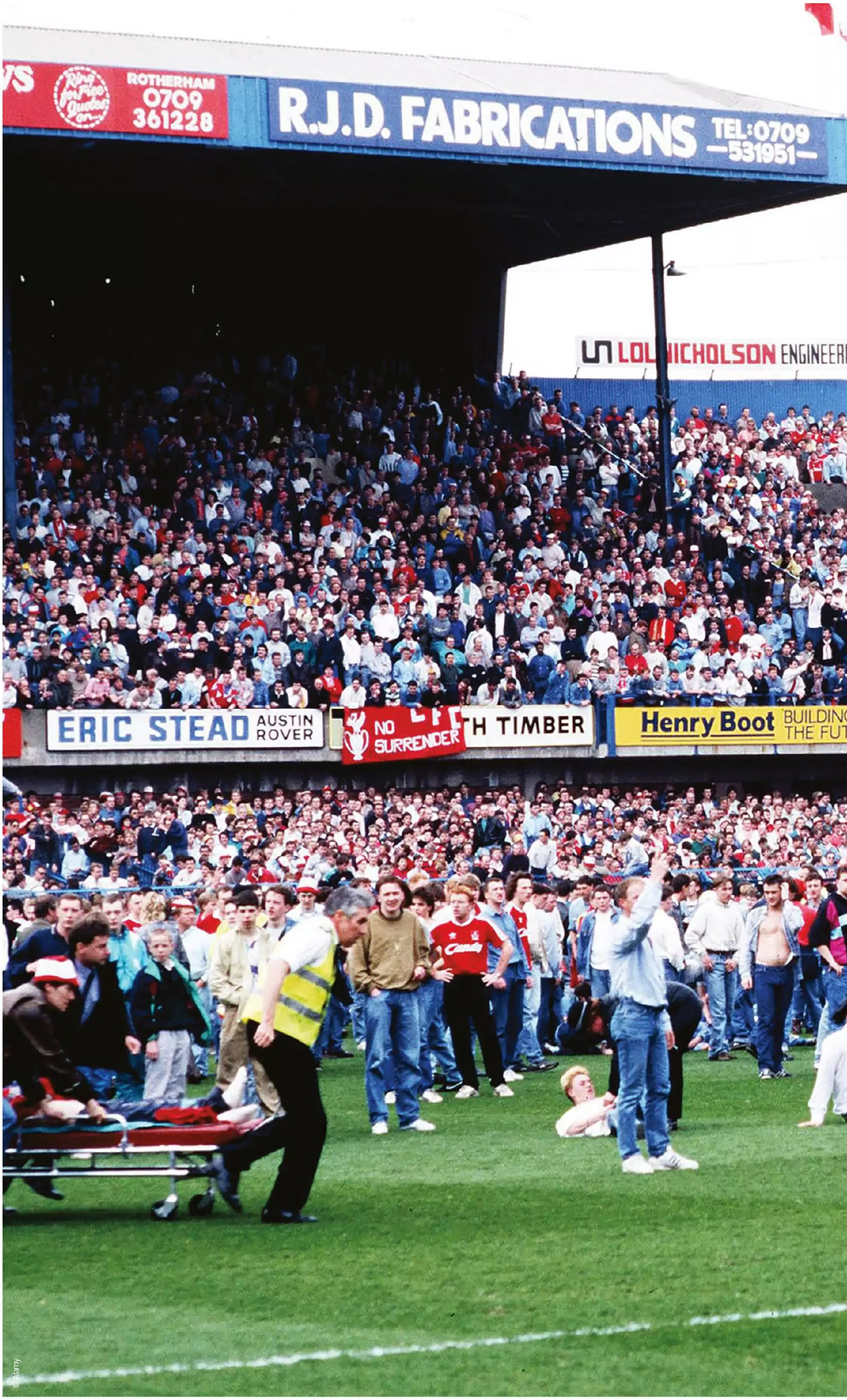
5 April 2002

THE QUEEN MOTHER LIES IN STATE

On 30 March 2002 the wife of King George VI, Queen Elizabeth – who was known as the Queen Mother after the death of her husband in 1952 – died at Windsor aged 101. Her daughter, Queen Elizabeth II, was at her side. A few days later, the Queen Mother's body was taken through London, accompanied by 1,600 troops, to Westminster Hall to lie in state until her funeral on 9 April. At Westminster Hall, an estimated 200,000 people filed past the coffin to pay their respects.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15 April 1989

HILLSBOROUGH DISASTER

During an FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest, a crush in the stands resulted in the tragic deaths of 94 Liverpool supporters. The game, which was being held at Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, was abandoned. In the days following the disaster, tabloid newspapers published stories blaming 'drunken' Liverpool fans for the crush. However, subsequent inquiries found South Yorkshire Police's crowd control to have been at fault, not the fans. Subsequent deaths as a result of injuries sustained during the disaster have brought the total death toll to 97.

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SCAN ME

WALLPAPER IN BACKGROUND GRANDIFLORA ROSE, DESIGNERS GUILD
PHOTOGRAPHS (BACKGROUND) POLLY WREFORD

ALL ABOUT

NEW YORK

Take a tour of the five boroughs as we explore the origins and evolution of the Big Apple

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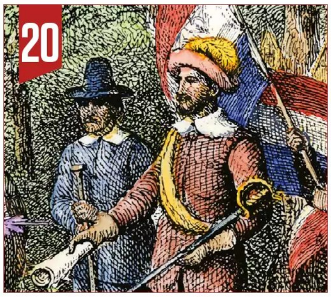


20 THE DUTCH IN MANHATTAN

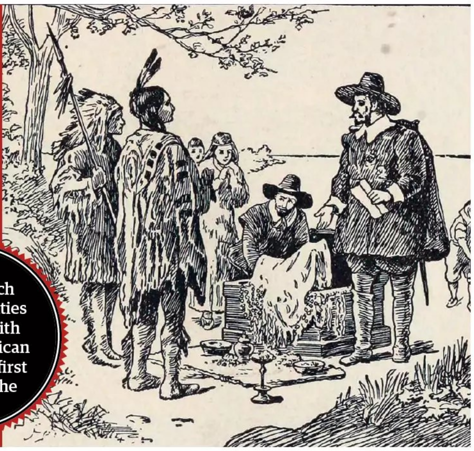
Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Emily Staniforth, Callum McKelvie

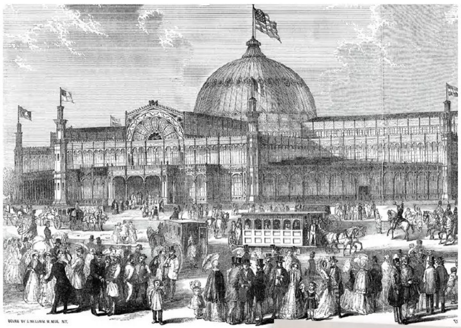
Key Events

1614 DUTCH SETTLEMENTS

Land around the New York Bay area is claimed by the Dutch in 1609, and Dutch settlements begin to be founded. A lucrative trading post is established on Manhattan Island and Fort Nassau is set up in the nearby Port of Albany.

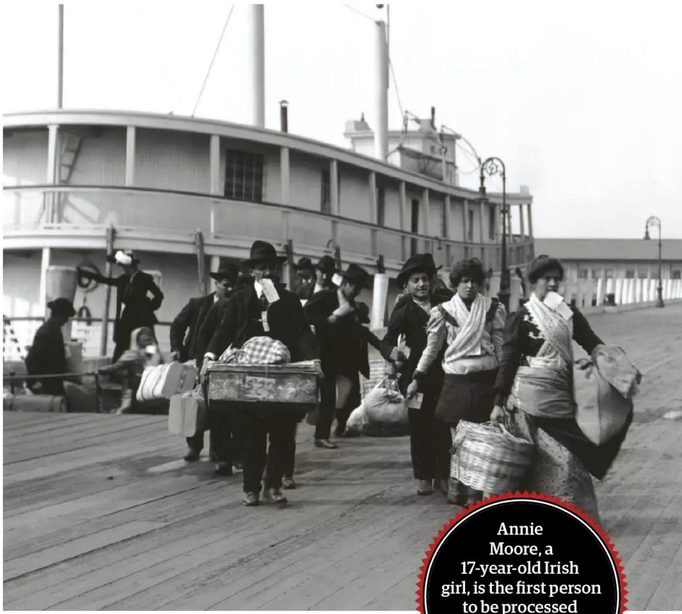


Under Dutch control, treaties are made with Native American groups who first inhabited the area.



1853 FIRST AMERICAN WORLD'S FAIR

The Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations is held in Bryant Park. It takes place inside a Crystal Palace, similar to the one built in London for the 1851 Great Exhibition. The fair suffers from financial troubles and a lack of exhibits.



Annie Moore, a 17-year-old Irish girl, is the first person to be processed at Ellis Island's immigration centre.

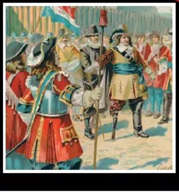
1892 ELLIS ISLAND OPENS

The first federal immigrant processing station in America is established on Ellis Island. At the centre, immigrants are inspected for disease and vetted before being allowed into New York. Ellis Island processes over 12 million new US citizens, operating until 1954.

NEW YORK BAY DISCOVERED 1524

Florentine explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano is the first European to discover what will later be named New York Bay. He describes it as "a very pleasant place".

1614

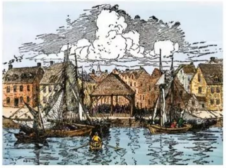


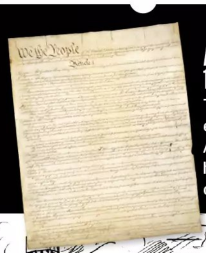
NEW YORK NAMED 1664

The Dutch surrender to the English and New Amsterdam is renamed New York after the Duke of York, who led the efforts to take over the city.

SLAVE REVOLT 1712

Over 20 enslaved people rebel and start a fire in Maiden Lane. Several people die as a result of the revolt and 21 slaves are arrested and executed.



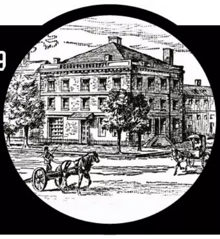


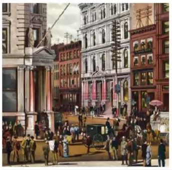
AMERICA'S CAPITAL 1788

The US Constitution formally establishes New York as America's capital. The city had served as the de facto capital since 1785.

PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE 1789

First President-elect George Washington moves into Franklin House in Manhattan. It functions as America's first presidential residence but Washington moves out the following year.



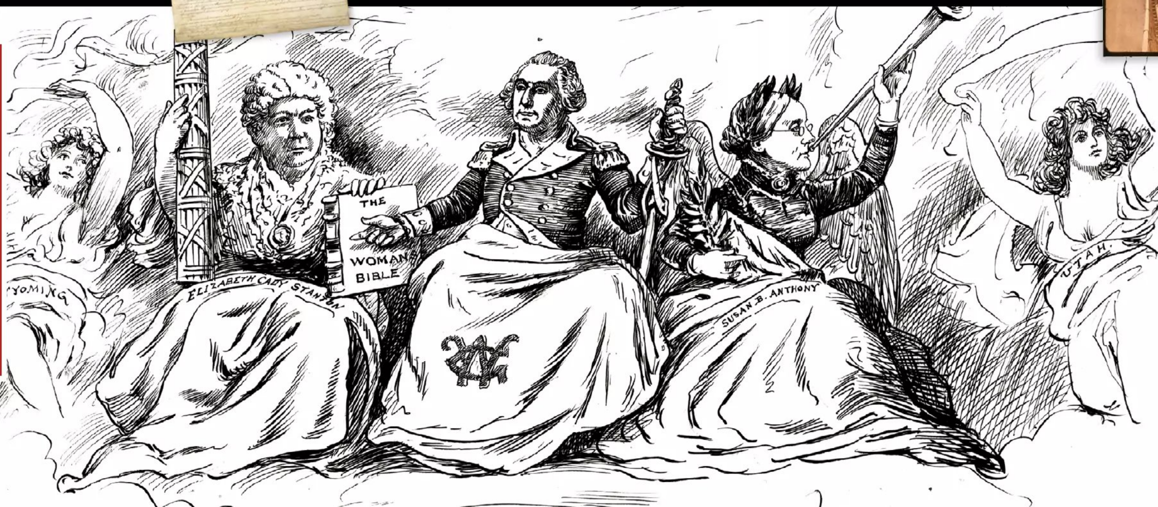


STOCK EXCHANGE FOUNDED 1817

In 1792, 24 stockbrokers meet to establish a new trading system, and 25 years later what will become the New York Stock Exchange is constituted on Wall Street.

1869 NWSA FOUNDED

The National Woman Suffrage Association is founded in New York by Susan B Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The organisation leads the fight for women's voting rights and is considered to be more radical than other women's rights movements.



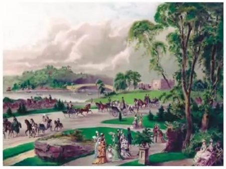
CAUTION
8
10

1929 WALL STREET CRASH

On what is now known as Black Tuesday, the New York stock market collapses and the US is plunged into the Great Depression. There are many reasons for the crash, which in turn leads to mass unemployment, homelessness and debt.

PLANNING FOR CENTRAL PARK 1853

Officials set aside over three square-kilometres of land for the creation of a large park. The construction of Central Park begins in 1858.



STATUE OF LIBERTY ERECTED 1885

A gift from France, the Statue of Liberty is sent from Paris to New York and is assembled on an island in New York Harbour.

WORLD'S FAIR ATTACK 1940

A terrorist bomb explodes at the World's Fair in the Queens district of New York, killing two police detectives. The bomber, and their motive, is never uncovered.

1853 1869 1892 1929 1931 2001

BROOKLYN BRIDGE BUILT 1870

Construction begins for the Brooklyn Bridge across the East River. The suspension bridge of steel cable wire is finished 14 years later.

HARLEM RENAISSANCE C.1920

African-American art and culture flourishes in the Harlem area of New York. Black artists, musicians and scholars contribute to the cultural and intellectual movement.

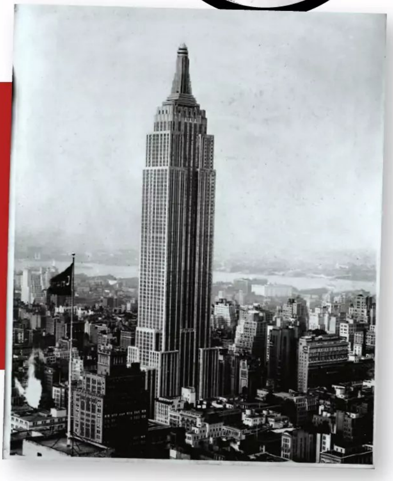
The Stonewall Inn

STONEWALL UPRISING 1969

The Stonewall Inn, a gay nightclub in Greenwich Village, is raided by police, sparking a riot that inspires a global gay rights movement.

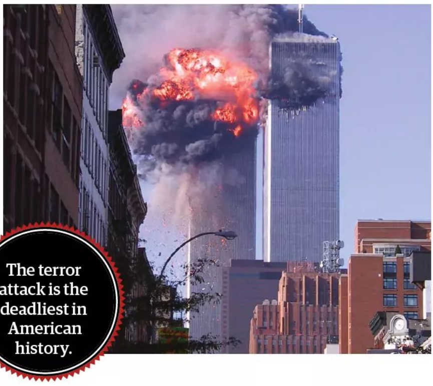
1931 EMPIRE STATE BUILDING OPENS

After just one year and 45 days of construction work, the Empire State Building is complete. It measures 443m high and has 102 floors, and until 1970 is the tallest building in the world.



2001 9/11 TERROR ATTACK

On 11 September 2001 a plane hijacked by members of al-Qaeda crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center. Minutes later, a second plane hits the south tower and a third crashes into the Pentagon. In total 2,997 people are killed.



The terror attack is the deadliest in American history.

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

New York City, United States

1913

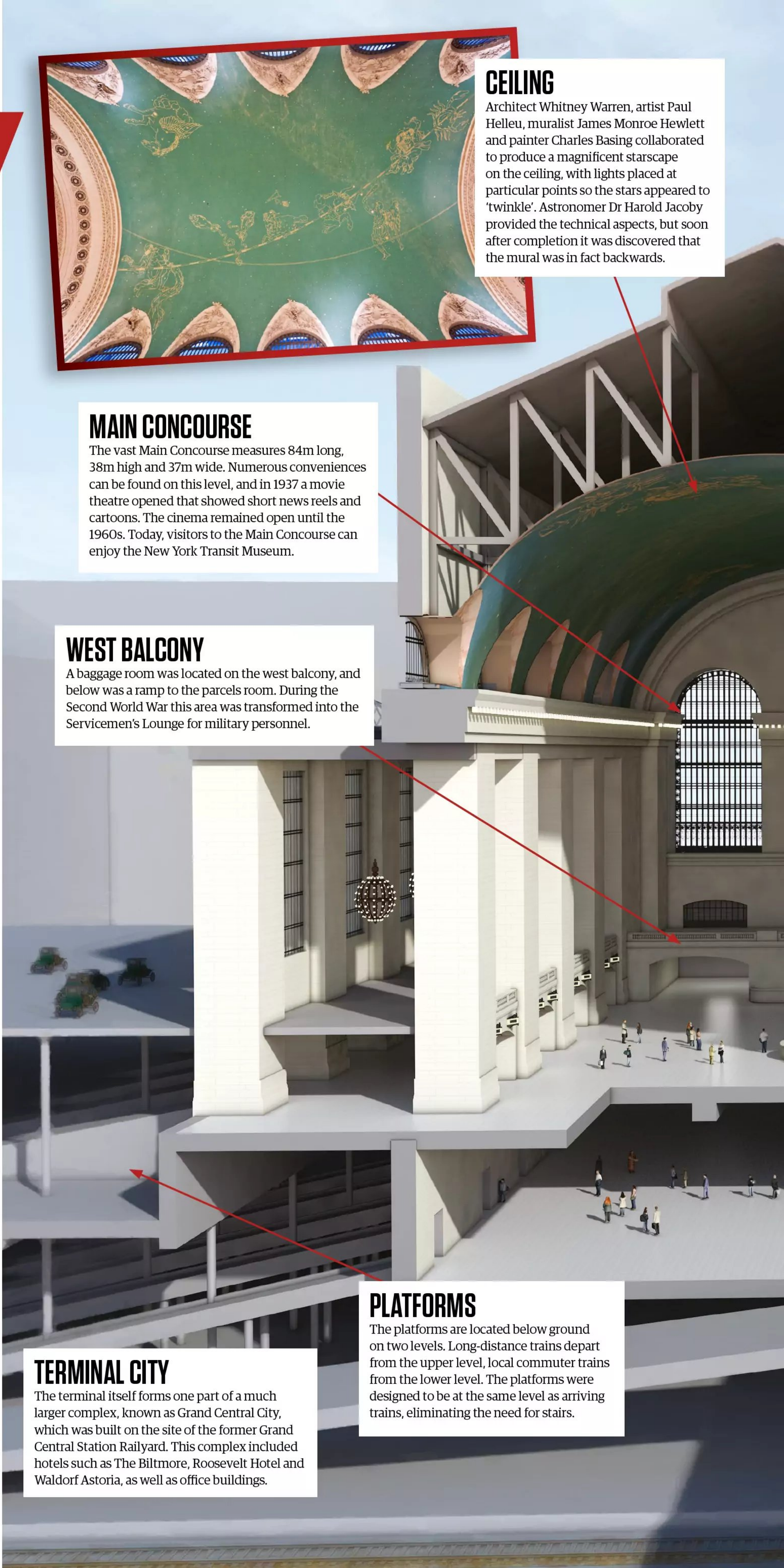
Towards the end of the 19th century, New York City had a problem. Concerns had slowly grown about the safety of steam trains and in particular the pollution they caused. Laws dictated that trains could travel no further than 42nd street, and in 1871 the first Grand Central depot opened in this location.

But problems quickly became apparent. Soot and smoke flooded the tunnels and overcrowding was also a regular occurrence. In 1882 and 1891 there were also a number of rail crashes, topped in 1902 by the worst crash in New York's history, with 15 people being killed and many injured. Enough was enough. Wholly electric trains were now possible and the decision was taken to convert to a fully electric service. To serve this, a new and modern terminal befitting the 20th century was needed.

Designs were submitted, with the firm Reed & Stern eventually winning the contract, collaborating with another – Warren & Wetmore. As well as being functional, it was decided that the terminal should live up to its name and be as grand as possible, and the imposing interior was adorned with exquisite details and modern conveniences. An upscale restaurant was also placed in the basement.

Funding the new terminal was the powerful and influential Vanderbilt family, whose patriarch Cornelius Vanderbilt had made an immense fortune as a shipping magnate, using some of his wealth to purchase railway stock. By the time of his death in 1877, the family controlled much of the local railway system. Cornelius and his direct heirs had passed away by the time Grand Central Terminal was completed, but their legacy continues – the restored Main Waiting Room being renamed the Vanderbilt Hall in the late 1990s.

On opening day on 2 February 1913, 150,000 people visited to catch a glimpse of the miraculous new Grand Central Terminal, and over a century later it remains the largest station in the world. ○



CEILING

Architect Whitney Warren, artist Paul Helleu, muralist James Monroe Hewlett and painter Charles Basing collaborated to produce a magnificent starscape on the ceiling, with lights placed at particular points so the stars appeared to 'twinkle'. Astronomer Dr Harold Jacoby provided the technical aspects, but soon after completion it was discovered that the mural was in fact backwards.

MAIN CONCOURSE

The vast Main Concourse measures 84m long, 38m high and 37m wide. Numerous conveniences can be found on this level, and in 1937 a movie theatre opened that showed short news reels and cartoons. The cinema remained open until the 1960s. Today, visitors to the Main Concourse can enjoy the New York Transit Museum.

WEST BALCONY

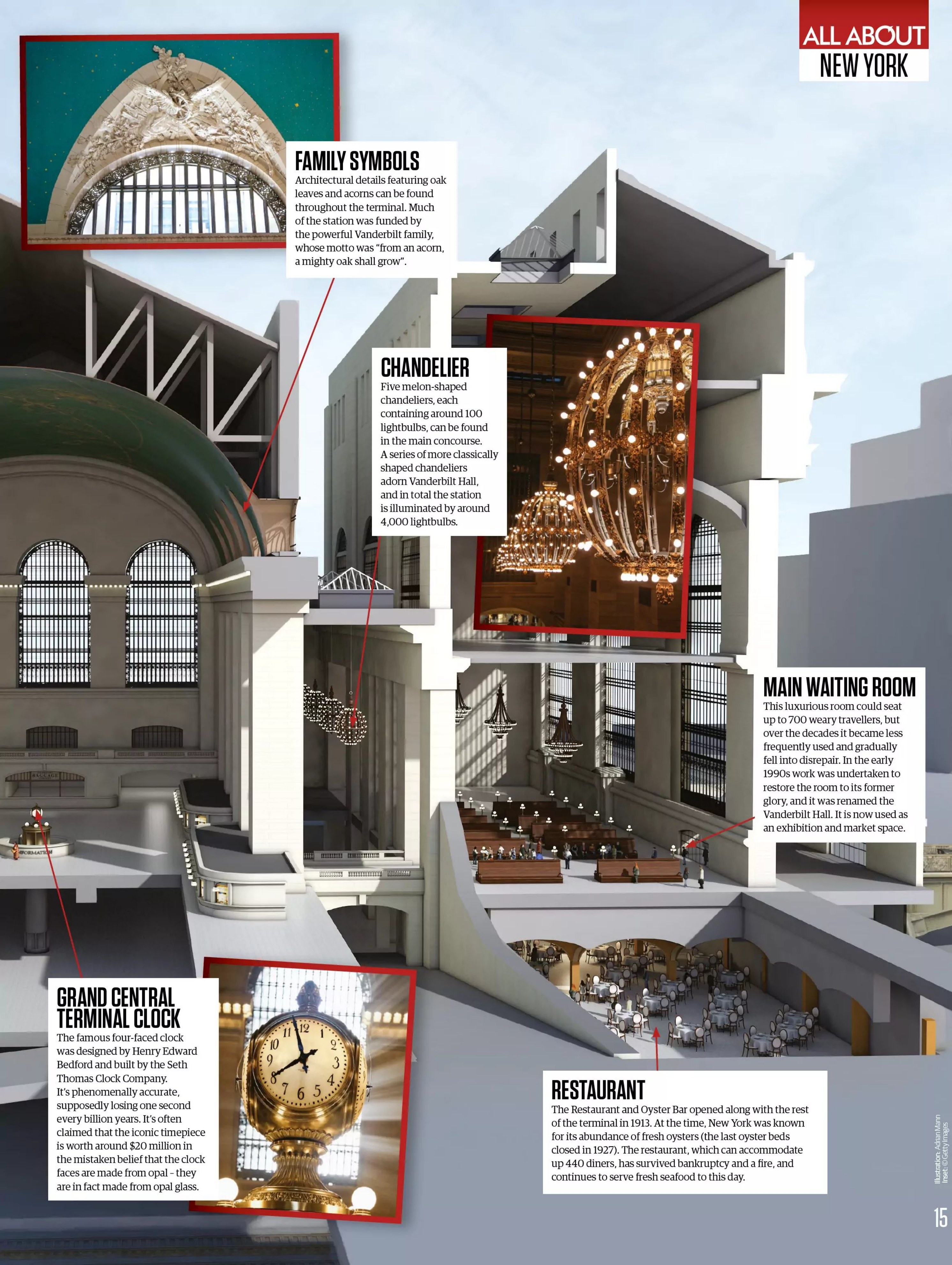
A baggage room was located on the west balcony, and below was a ramp to the parcels room. During the Second World War this area was transformed into the Servicemen's Lounge for military personnel.

PLATFORMS

The platforms are located below ground on two levels. Long-distance trains depart from the upper level, local commuter trains from the lower level. The platforms were designed to be at the same level as arriving trains, eliminating the need for stairs.

TERMINAL CITY

The terminal itself forms one part of a much larger complex, known as Grand Central City, which was built on the site of the former Grand Central Station Railyard. This complex included hotels such as The Biltmore, Roosevelt Hotel and Waldorf Astoria, as well as office buildings.



FAMILY SYMBOLS

Architectural details featuring oak leaves and acorns can be found throughout the terminal. Much of the station was funded by the powerful Vanderbilt family, whose motto was "from an acorn, a mighty oak shall grow".

CHANDELIER

Five melon-shaped chandeliers, each containing around 100 lightbulbs, can be found in the main concourse. A series of more classically shaped chandeliers adorn Vanderbilt Hall, and in total the station is illuminated by around 4,000 lightbulbs.

MAIN WAITING ROOM

This luxurious room could seat up to 700 weary travellers, but over the decades it became less frequently used and gradually fell into disrepair. In the early 1990s work was undertaken to restore the room to its former glory, and it was renamed the Vanderbilt Hall. It is now used as an exhibition and market space.

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL CLOCK

The famous four-faced clock was designed by Henry Edward Bedford and built by the Seth Thomas Clock Company. It's phenomenally accurate, supposedly losing one second every billion years. It's often claimed that the iconic timepiece is worth around $20 million in the mistaken belief that the clock faces are made from opal – they are in fact made from opal glass.

RESTAURANT

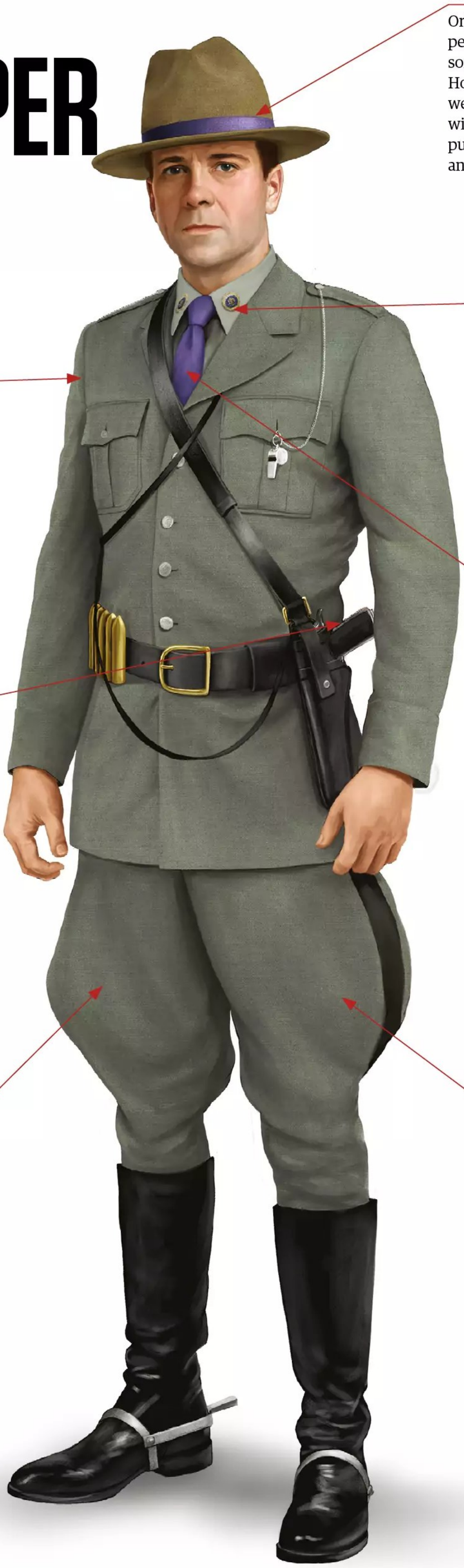
The Restaurant and Oyster Bar opened along with the rest of the terminal in 1913. At the time, New York was known for its abundance of fresh oysters (the last oyster beds closed in 1927). The restaurant, which can accommodate up 440 diners, has survived bankruptcy and a fire, and continues to serve fresh seafood to this day.

Illustration: Adrian Mann
Inset: © Getty Images

NEW YORK STATE TROOPER

New York, USA

c.1930s



HEADS UP

Originally troopers were issued with a peaked service cap, which was retained by some officers and for full-dress occasions. However, for day-to-day duties troopers were later equipped with a high-banded wide-rimmed hat, similar to a Stetson. A purple band was worn around the crown and remains to this day.

ORIGIN STORY

The New York State Police were established in 1917 to provide law enforcement in the state's rural areas. The first superintendent was George Fletcher Chandler, a soldier and surgeon who served between 1917-23. To this day the troopers can't operate within New York City limits without the permission of the governor.

UNIQUE ID

Unlike other state troopers, members of the New York force do not wear a badge on their breast pocket or hat. Instead, a small badge is worn on the collar. Around the size of a coin, it states the trooper's designation and number and is designed to be visible with the coat on or off.

PURPLE POSE

The troopers' ties have always been a striking shade of purple. However, in 1954 a controversial change was introduced at the behest of Frances Hutt, the wife of New York Governor Thomas E Dewey. Disliking the traditional purple, she instigated plans to change the colour of the tie and hat band. But when Dewey lost the next election the plans were shelved.

FIREARMS

At the behest of Superintendent Chandler, troopers carried their weapons openly on their belts. This was not common practice in other state police forces but Chandler believed a trooper should be able to draw his weapon quickly. They were also issued with a Winchester rifle and riding crop, later changed to a night stick.

GREY AREA

From the force's inception the New York State Trooper uniform has been a distinctive shade of grey. The colour was chosen to allow the men to blend in, but there was another reason. "As my men are to stand between right and wrong it seems fitting to clothe them in the neutral shade by mixing black and white together," said Chandler.

BREECHES

Traditionally, New York State Troopers wore breeches made out of grey and black wool. Motorcycle troopers would continue to wear breeches until 1957, along with spurs and riding boots. In 1954, changes to make the uniform more practical saw the introduction of straight trousers.

Illustration: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

BRICK FROM THE STONEWALL INN

The uprising in NYC spearheaded the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement, and bricks from the building have become iconic

New York City, 1969

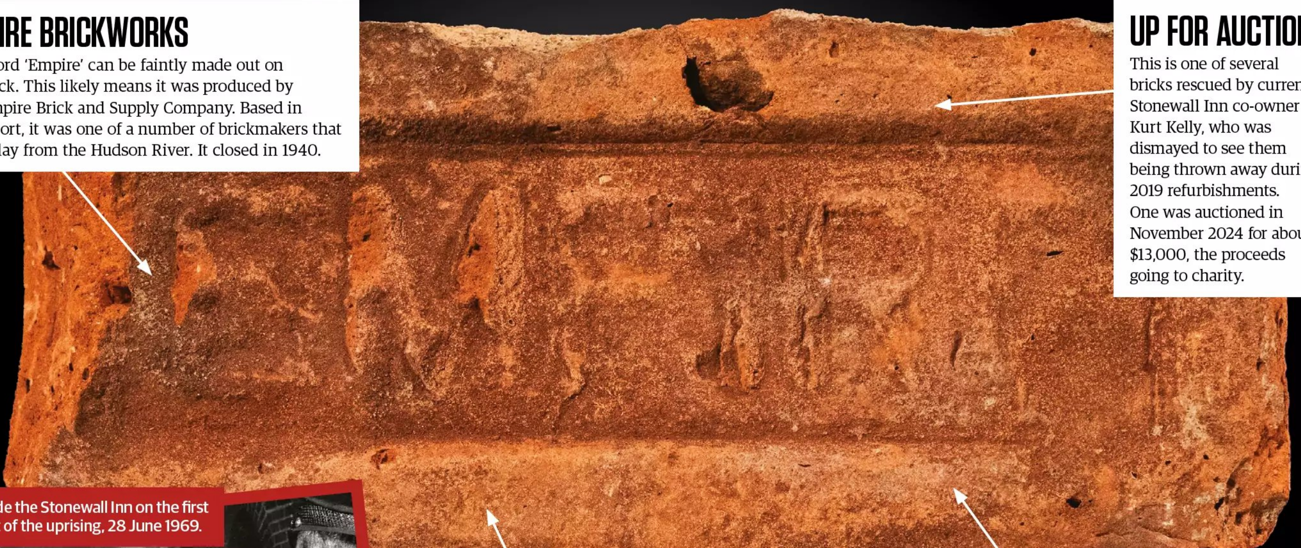
On 28 June 1969, the queer people of New York City fought back. When police raided the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay bar, in the early hours of the morning they hauled patrons and staff out into the street and began to arrest them. Police harassment of LGBTQ+ people was a frequent occurrence, as same-sex relationships were still illegal in the city. Additionally, many gay venues were operated by the mafia and were often run without a liquor licence.

As onlookers and patrons witnessed the police harassment, they decided to take action, refusing to disperse when ordered and hurling objects at the officers. As the situation worsened the police were forced to barricade themselves within the bar. For the next five days protests continued but the legacy of the uprising goes even further. A year later Christopher Street Liberation Day was held, considered the first Pride march.

In subsequent years what happened at the Stonewall Inn that night has often been referred to as a 'riot', though this description is disputed and according to the Library of Congress was likely used by the police to justify their violent actions. Stormé DeLarverie, who was arrested that evening, said: "It was a rebellion, it was an uprising, it was a civil rights disobedience – it wasn't no damn riot!"

One common story about the night is that the uprising began after a brick was thrown at the police. While the truth of this is debated, the bricks of the Stonewall Inn have nonetheless become iconic and symbolic. The original exterior facade of the building was restored in 2023 and in 2024 the Stonewall visitor centre opened, on the 55th anniversary of the uprising.

In December 2024 the brick shown here was donated to the American LGBTQ+ Museum by Stonewall co-owners Kurt Kelly and Stacy Lentz. The museum is a new initiative, partnered with the New York Historical Society, and construction has begun on a permanent space at the society's headquarters at Central Park. Upon receiving the brick, the museum's director Ben Garcia said the intention was to place it "in the walls of this new museum as a connection to the spirit of Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P Johnson and the countless others who stood up for LGBTQ rights".



EMPIRE BRICKWORKS

The word 'Empire' can be faintly made out on the brick. This likely means it was produced by the Empire Brick and Supply Company. Based in Stockport, it was one of a number of brickmakers that used clay from the Hudson River. It closed in 1940.

UP FOR AUCTION

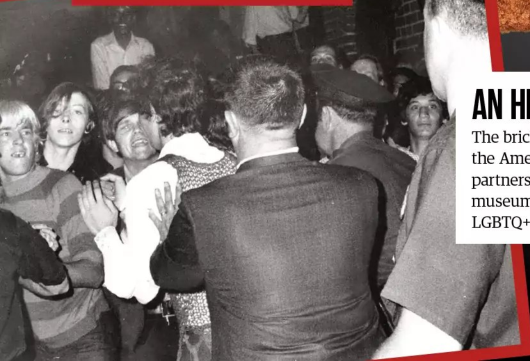
This is one of several bricks rescued by current Stonewall Inn co-owner Kurt Kelly, who was dismayed to see them being thrown away during 2019 refurbishments. One was auctioned in November 2024 for about $13,000, the proceeds going to charity.

AN HISTORICAL ARTEFACT

The brick is the first item of the collections of the American LGBTQ+ Museum. Launched in partnership with the New York Historical society, the museum is a new initiative that seeks to celebrate LGBTQ+ heritage and preserve relevant artefacts.

WHO THREW IT?

The question of who threw the first brick at Stonewall is often debated, with Marsha P Johnson and Sylvia Rivera usually suggested. But it's not clear whether a brick was thrown at all. The protest is said to have erupted when, as she was being arrested, Stormé DeLarverie asked the crowd: "Aren't you going to do something?"



Outside the Stonewall Inn on the first night of the uprising, 28 June 1969.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

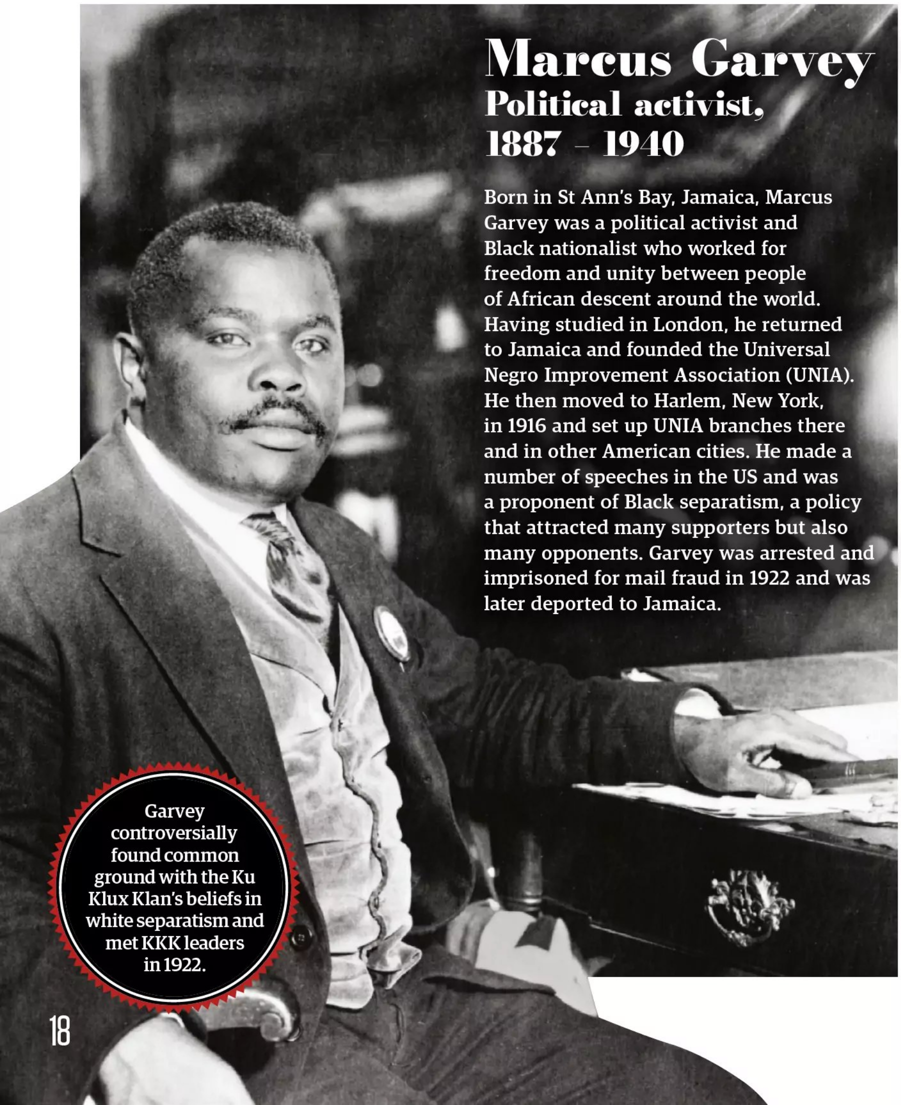
HARLEM RENAISSANCE HEROES

Meet some of the leading lights of New York's African-American cultural movement

MA RAINEY

SINGER, 1886 – 1939

Gertrude Malissa Nix Pridgett was a blues singer from Columbus, Georgia, who later became known as Ma Rainey. Soon after her first performance in her hometown, she began to tour the country in vaudeville shows. She became famous for the way she combined vaudeville with Southern blues, a style that derived from West African music sung by enslaved people, and it was this music that became highly influential and connected her to the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s. Rainey was also among the first blues singers to record her music. She influenced and inspired literature by Langston Hughes and Sterling Brown, and later Alice Walker.



Marcus Garvey

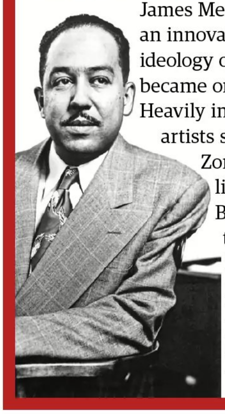
Political activist, 1887 – 1940

Born in St Ann's Bay, Jamaica, Marcus Garvey was a political activist and Black nationalist who worked for freedom and unity between people of African descent around the world. Having studied in London, he returned to Jamaica and founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). He then moved to Harlem, New York, in 1916 and set up UNIA branches there and in other American cities. He made a number of speeches in the US and was a proponent of Black separatism, a policy that attracted many supporters but also many opponents. Garvey was arrested and imprisoned for mail fraud in 1922 and was later deported to Jamaica.

Garvey controversially found common ground with the Ku Klux Klan's beliefs in white separatism and met KKK leaders in 1922.

LANGSTON HUGHES

POET AND ACTIVIST, 1901-67



James Mercer Langston Hughes was an innovative poet who embraced the ideology of the Harlem Renaissance and became one of the movement's leaders. Heavily influenced by fellow Harlem artists such as Louis Armstrong and Zora Neale Hurston, Hughes' literary works centred around Black working class life. He tackled issues like racial inequality and the experiences of African-Americans. In 1982 Hughes' home in Harlem was put on the National Register of Historic Places.

AUGUSTA SAVAGE

SCULPTOR, 1892 – 1962

A talented sculptor, originally from Florida, Augusta Savage's talent blossomed in New York when she moved to Harlem at the height of the Harlem Renaissance. She made her name with portrait sculpture and was known for creating works of art based on African-American features. She also made busts of influential figures such as Marcus Garvey and WEB Du Bois. Savage later taught at her own art studio in Harlem.

JAMES VAN DER ZEE

PHOTOGRAPHER, 1886 – 1983

An artist in his own right during the Harlem Renaissance, photographer James Van Der Zee also documented the major events and figures of the movement. Specialising in capturing images of Black New Yorkers, Van Der Zee's photography showcased the buzzing, creative atmosphere of Harlem, particularly during the 1920s and 1930s. Of his photography, Van Der Zee said he "tried to see that every picture was better-looking than the person".

Zora Neale Hurston

Writer and filmmaker, 1891 – 1960

Zora Neale Hurston was born in Alabama and joined a group of artists and scholars involved in the Harlem Renaissance while she was a student in New York City. She had an interest in anthropology and African-American folklore, writing and researching on the subjects, but is arguably best known for her literary works of fiction. Hurston's novels and short stories often centre around African-American characters and issues of importance in America's Black communities. Her most famous and critically acclaimed novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), is considered a seminal work of the Harlem Renaissance.

Hurston was living in poverty when she died, but her grave was eventually given a marker by the author Alice Walker, who idolised her work.

Alain LeRoy Locke

Writer and philosopher, 1885 – 1954

Regarded as the 'Father of the Harlem Renaissance', Alain LeRoy Locke was a prominent writer, philosopher and educator. Having graduated from Harvard University, he also studied at various other prominent schools, including Oxford and Berlin universities. In 1925 Locke edited the *The New Negro: An Interpretation*, a collection of writing on African-American art and literature which sparked the cultural movement that would come to be known as the Harlem Renaissance. At the heart of the Renaissance was Locke's philosophical concept of the 'New Negro'. He served as a mentor to many other important figures of the movement, including Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes.

Locke was the first African-American Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University.

JESSIE FAUSET

WRITER AND EDUCATOR, 1882 – 1961

One of the lesser-known figures of the Harlem Renaissance, Jessie Fauset was a novelist, poet and literary editor of *The Crisis* (published by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). As editor, Fauset championed Harlem Renaissance figures like Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen. Hughes said Fauset, among others, "midwifed the so-called New Negro literature into being". Her own literary work was also noteworthy and promoted the ideas of the movement.

WEB DU BOIS

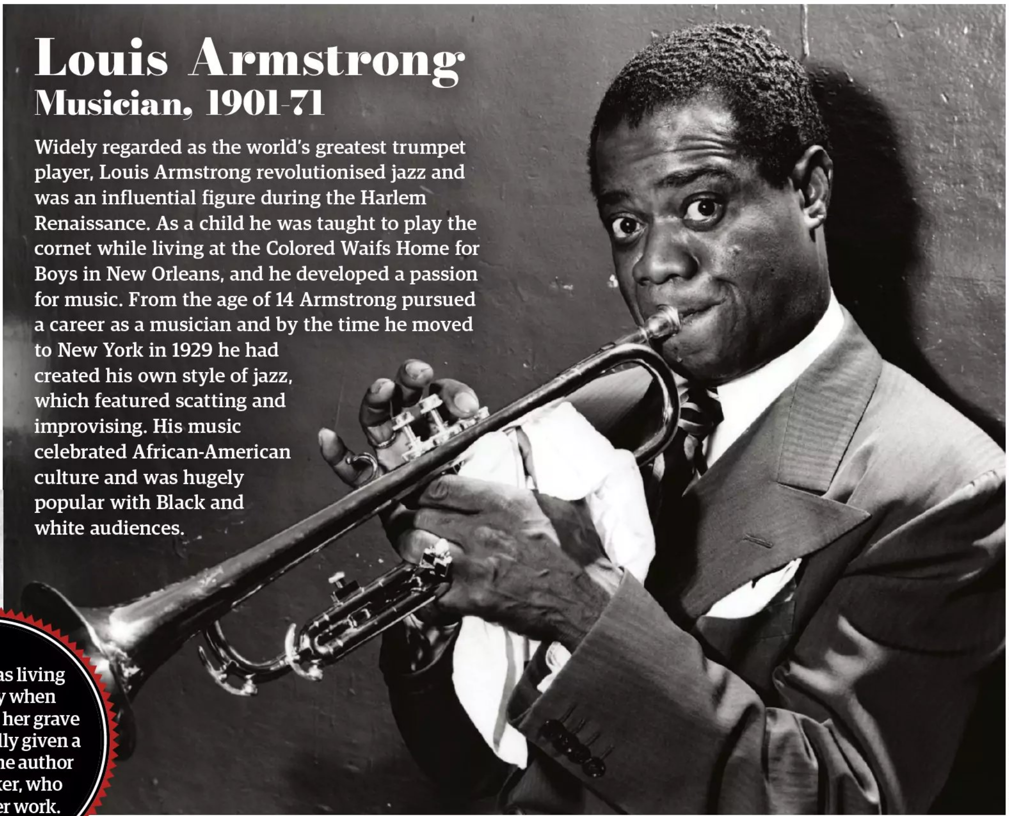
SOCIOLOGIST AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST, 1868 – 1963

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was the first African-American to earn a PhD from Harvard University and became an influential figure in the American civil rights movement. He was part of the group who founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and his work *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) was a central text of the Harlem Renaissance. He was also a mentor to many key figures in the movement.

Louis Armstrong

Musician, 1901-71

Widely regarded as the world's greatest trumpet player, Louis Armstrong revolutionised jazz and was an influential figure during the Harlem Renaissance. As a child he was taught to play the cornet while living at the Colored Waifs Home for Boys in New Orleans, and he developed a passion for music. From the age of 14 Armstrong pursued a career as a musician and by the time he moved to New York in 1929 he had created his own style of jazz, which featured scatting and improvising. His music celebrated African-American culture and was hugely popular with Black and white audiences.



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THE DUTCH IN MANHATTAN

Russell Shorto guides us through the history of New York's first European settlers

Russell Shorto is an historian and author who is best known for his research into the Dutch history of New York City. He is the author of *The Island at the Center of the World* (Doubleday, 2005) and was given a Dutch knighthood in 2009 for advancing Dutch-American historical awareness.

What was the landscape of Manhattan Island before the arrival of the Dutch?

Physically, it was very varied. There were thick forests, swamps and marsh land, and the island is famous for its schist (bedrock) which made Manhattan stable for building skyscrapers much later. The area had bears, deer, otters, whales and porpoises and a very reedy shoreline which was famous for its oysters. In terms of Native Americans, the wider region of New York City was the homeland of the people variously known as Lenape, Delaware or Munsee, so that would presumably have been who the Dutch signed the infamous purchase of Manhattan Island with in 1626. Manhattan before the Dutch was mostly used seasonally for hunting, and they say that because archeological evidence shows there weren't any permanent settlements.

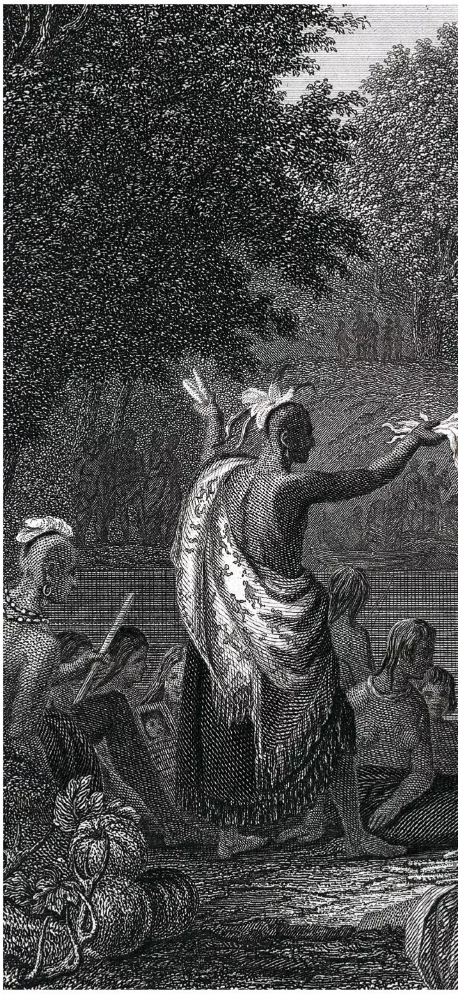
When and how did the Dutch come to establish their settlement on Manhattan Island?

That story begins in 1609 when an English explorer, Henry Hudson, sailed on behalf of the Dutch East India Company. He was a renowned explorer who was let go from an English company called the Muscovy Company (we don't know why). The Dutch had spies in London and they knew that Hudson was let go and that he knew a lot, so they hired him to find a shorter route to the riches of Asia going east around Scandinavia. Hudson had already tried that so he defied the orders and went west because he believed there was a shortcut through North America. He was poking his way along the coast looking for this shortcut and, since he did this charting on behalf of the Dutch, the Dutch laid claim to the territory he discovered in the New York region. It wasn't until 1624 that they really got underway with establishing a colony of the first settlers. New Amsterdam, the capital at the tip of Manhattan Island, was established in 1626 so we're currently in the 400th anniversary season of the Dutch settlement.

What was society in Manhattan like under Dutch control?

In the very early stages it was extremely primitive, but from the beginning it was quite a mixed population. The Netherlands was the melting pot of Europe in the 17th century, partly because they had a policy of religious tolerance, which other European nations did not, but also because it was in the Low Countries so it was easy to flee to. This was an age of religious warfare so people would escape and find refuge in the Netherlands. When the society founded a colony it tended to be the people from the lower rungs of society with nothing to lose who would join ventures to the middle of nowhere. The famous statistic is that there were 18 languages being spoken in New Amsterdam, and that was at a time when there were only about 500 people living

> *"People from the lower rungs of society with nothing to lose joined ventures to the middle of nowhere"*

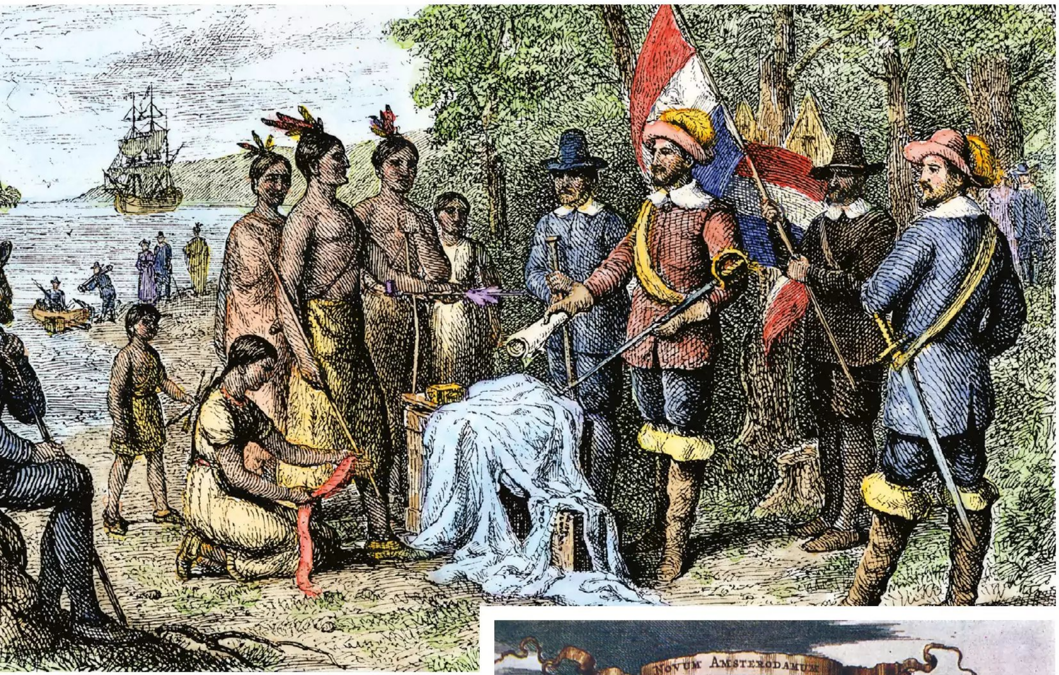


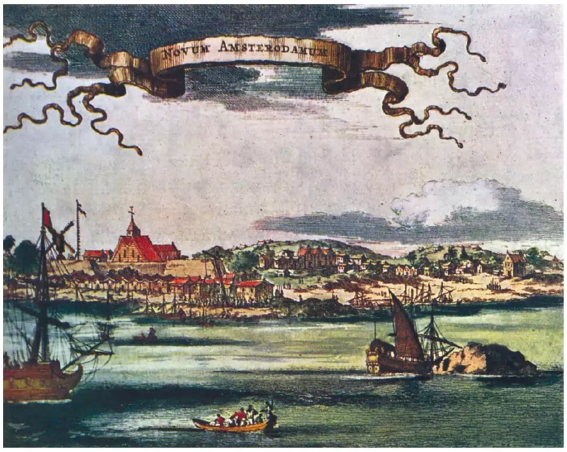
TOP
A depiction of the purchase of Manhattan Island in 1626

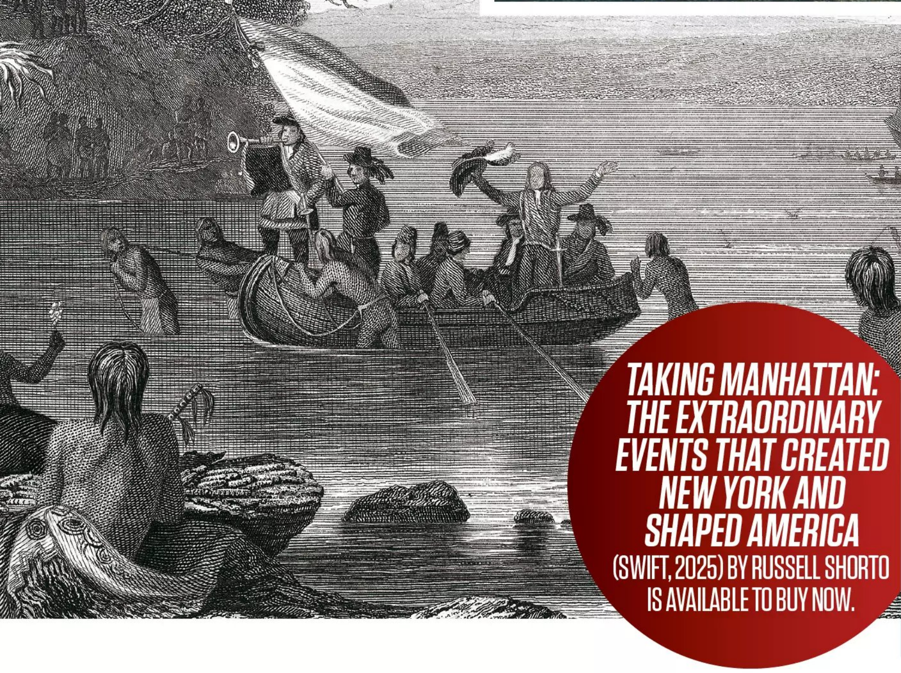
MIDDLE
New Amsterdam had an extremely diverse population – 18 languages were spoken

BOTTOM
English explorer Henry Hudson sailed to New York on behalf of the Dutch East India Company in 1609

Headshot: © Izzy Watson







there. As I sometimes say: New York was New York even before it was New York!

How and why did the British take control of Manhattan?

The Dutch colony at Manhattan was active for 40 years. In 1664, the Stuarts were back on the English throne and wanted to get serious about building an empire. The colonies that the English had already planted presented a problem as they were established by Puritans who had just been on the other side of a civil conflict with the monarchy. So the English sent a flotilla of warships, headed by a man named Richard Nicolls, with two very difficult missions: to take New Netherland from the Dutch and to bring the Puritans in New England into line. Nicolls engaged the Dutch in negotiation and they ended up with an arrangement that suited all the people on the ground. The Dutch government wasn't pleased with what was essentially a merger, the terms of which allowed the Dutch and the mixed population in Manhattan to keep everything. They would keep their homes, their businesses and their global network because Nicolls didn't just want the real estate. The Dutch had created the early stages of capitalism and Nicolls knew it was valuable. He wanted to keep the people because they were the ones who built this new kind of city. Manhattan kept its Dutchness but it would transfer to English ownership.

Why was so much information lost after the English took over New Amsterdam and it became New York?

It wasn't necessarily lost but it was ignored. Once the English were in charge, New York remained this mixed place because of the terms of the agreement. Nobody stopped to look at the past 40 years and write down that history. It just wasn't the way they operated. I think unconsciously Americans, even today, look at the world through English eyes. They still have that remnant of once being English and that was a source of pride. As America became much more populated with different ethnicities, it was like Englishness was the thing of value that gave you your foundation. People were not of a mind to value things that were not English. Then in the 1960s and 1970s you start to have an interest in multi-ethnicity and in marginalised peoples and that created a new awareness of America's Dutch past. The records of the colony, 12,000 pages of handwritten court cases and council minutes, have been preserved in New York's State Library and open up a whole other way of looking at early American history. ○

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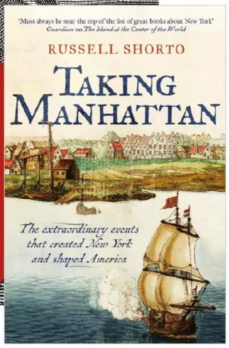

'Must always be near the top of the list of great books about New York'
Guardian on The Island at the Center of the World
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The extraordinary events that created New York and shaped America

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NEW YORK CITY SIGHTS

Five world-famous landmarks every visitor to the Big Apple must see

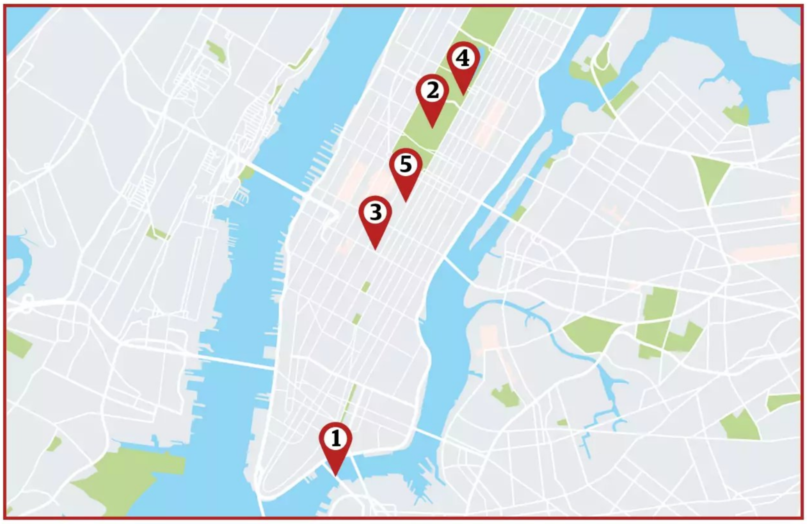
1 BROOKLYN BRIDGE

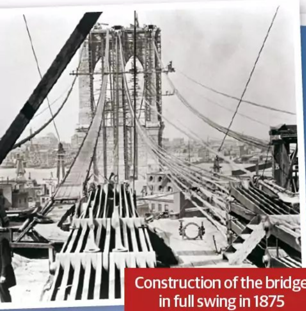
NY 10038

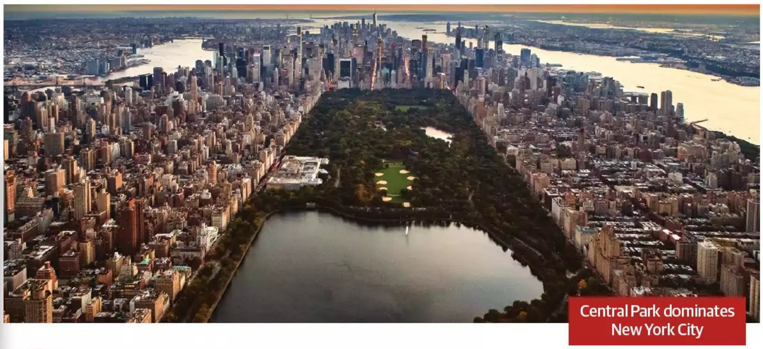
The Brooklyn Bridge dominates the East River. The work of German-American engineer and architect John A Roebling, it connects the Brooklyn area of New York to Manhattan. Work began in 1869 and the bridge was finally completed in 1883. During the work John Roebling's son and chief engineer Washington Roebling became bed ridden. He had undertaken multiple dives into the East River while exploring options for the Bridge's foundations, but had failed to rise slowly and safely, contracting the bends. During his illness, his wife Emily Warren Roebling relayed his instructions and handled the day-to-day management of the site and the various political and bureaucratic matters involved in construction.

Many of the workers were immigrants, particularly German, Italian and Irish, among others. The work was incredibly dangerous, with at least 20 people dying during construction and numerous others becoming ill due to the labour. The Brooklyn Bridge has stood proud for over 150 years and remains a popular landmark.

The bridge is open 24 hours a day and is free to walk, drive or cycle across.




Construction of the bridge in full swing in 1875


Central Park dominates New York City

2 CENTRAL PARK

72ND STREET, 5TH AVENUE

During the 19th century, as New York City continued to rapidly expand, many of its inhabitants became concerned about the increasingly dense urban landscape. As a result plans were soon developed for an enormous public garden, which was to be placed in the very centre of the huge city. A competition was held for a design and the submission of Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux was selected, with construction beginning in 1858 and the first section opening the same year. Work continued over the next 14 years and cost US$14 million, roughly US$340,000,000 in today's money.

Central Park encompasses 3.41 square-kilometres of territory and is enjoyed by over 42 million visitors every year. One of the most noteworthy sites within the park is The Obelisk, also known as Cleopatra's Needle. This is one of two obelisks discovered by the Romans in 12 BCE and was placed in Central park in 1881.

Central Park is open 6am to 1am seven days a week. Entry is free, though the cost of admission to the attractions within varies.

Workman during construction of the Empire State Building

The 1930s skyscraper still dominates the New York skyline

3 EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

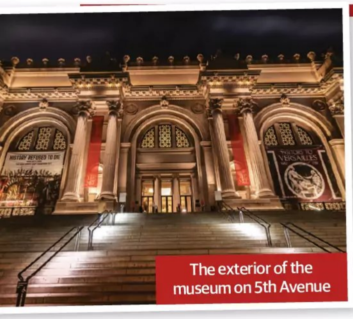
20 WEST 34TH STREET

The Empire State Building was designed to be the tallest structure in the world. Construction began on 17 March 1930 and, despite the enormity of the task, was finished impressively quickly only a year and 45 days later. Unfortunately, upon completion the ongoing economic downturn caused by the Great Depression meant that it proved difficult for the building's owners to find tenants to occupy the huge structure. Even clever tricks such as turning on the lights on empty floors could not fool the city's residents into believing that the building was full.

In 1933 the building featured prominently in the climactic scenes of the classic monster movie *King Kong*, cementing its cultural importance and popularity. Nonetheless, it would remain partly unoccupied until the end of the Second World War. Five weeks before the end of the conflict, the Empire State witnessed a tragedy when a B-25 bomber on a routine flight crashed into it. Fourteen people were killed, but as the crash occurred on a Saturday there were fewer casualties than there may have been during a busy working day.

By 1946, 15,000 people were hard at work within the towering complex. The Empire State Building remained the world's tallest building until 1970, when it was overtaken by the World Trade Centre. The skyscraper remains the 43rd tallest in the world, over 90 years after its construction.

The Empire State Building is open 10am to 9pm seven days a week. Ticket prices vary depending on the level of access visitors would like, please check online.



The exterior of the museum on 5th Avenue

4 THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

1000 5TH AVENUE

The Metropolitan Museum was created in 1870 with the intention of founding a national museum that would bring art and culture to the American people. Its first president, lawyer John Jay, managed to convince a consortium of influential businessmen to support him in the venture. Originally opening at the Dodworth building on 5th Avenue, the museum moved to its current location in 1880. The new site allowed the museum to continue to grow its already impressive collections and would undergo many changes, the original gothic front being superseded by its current appearance in 1926. A comprehensive interior restructuring was carried out between 1971 and 1991, adding a number of areas, including the American Wing.

In 2021 the museum unveiled a plaque acknowledging its location in the heart of Lenapehoking, the land of the indigenous Lenape peoples that later became New York. Some of the most famous objects among the museum's collections include Vincent van Gogh's *Self-Portrait with a Straw Hat* (1887) and an Egyptian hippopotamus statue nicknamed William, which is the museum's unofficial mascot.

The museum is open Sunday to Tuesday 10am to 5pm, and Friday and Saturday 10am to 9pm. Ticket prices vary, with the average adult entry being $30.

5 ROCKEFELLER CENTER

45 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA

The Rockefeller Center is a collection of 19 buildings commissioned by John D Rockefeller. His intention was to create a commercial complex that would not only prove popular with New York residents and tourists, but also celebrate art and culture. The design of the buildings was undertaken by some of the foremost architects of the time and celebrated the latest in art deco developments.

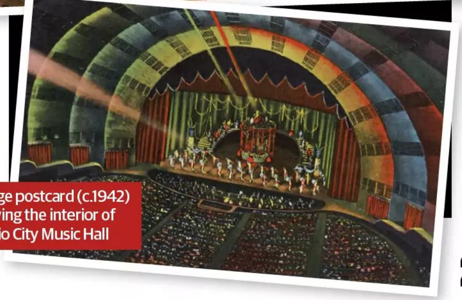
Originally, one of the buildings was intended to house a new and permanent home for the Metropolitan Opera. However, the opera later ran into financial difficulty due to the Wall Street Crash and was forced to pull out. Not one to give up, Rockefeller continued with the planned construction of what would later be described as a 'city within a city'.

The Rockefeller Centre boasts many must-see sights, such as Radio City Music Hall, which is renowned as the world's largest indoor theatre. The roof of 30 Rockefeller Plaza contains Top of the Rock, an inside observation deck that allows visitors to see across the entire city. Outside this building can also be found the Sunken Plaza, where Paul Manship's famous *Prometheus* statue is located.

Every December an enormous Christmas tree is placed outside 30 Rockefeller Plaza's main entrance, a popular event that draws visitors from all over the world to mark the holiday period.

The plaza itself is open 24-hours but entry to the various locations and entertainments varies. Check online.

The Rockefeller Center is an impressive collection of 19 commercial buildings



A vintage postcard (c.1942) showing the interior of Radio City Music Hall

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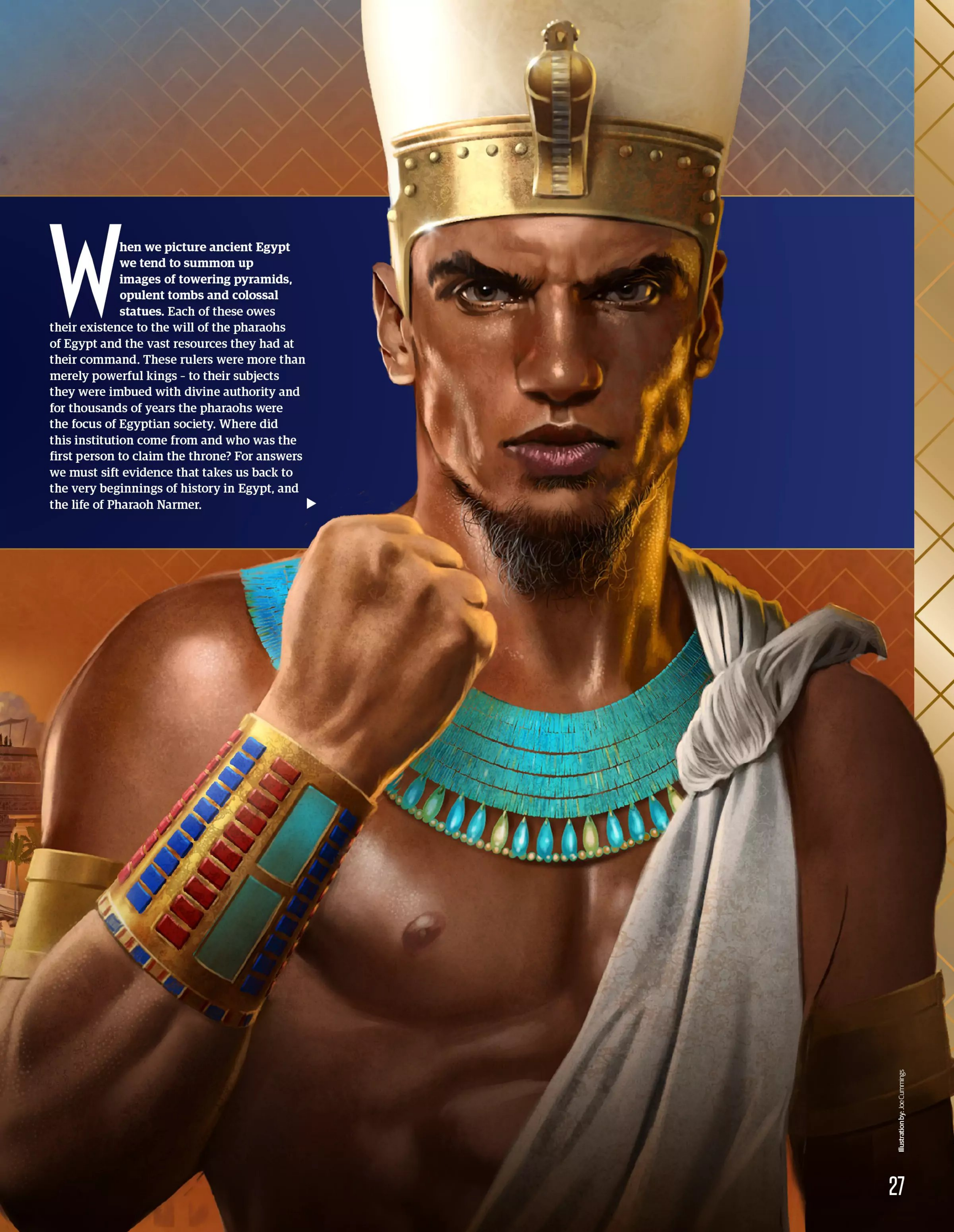
EGYPT'S EMPIRE MAKER

THE FIRST PHARAOH

How Narmer unified two ancient crowns to forge the First Dynasty



When we picture ancient Egypt we tend to summon up images of towering pyramids, opulent tombs and colossal statues. Each of these owes their existence to the will of the pharaohs of Egypt and the vast resources they had at their command. These rulers were more than merely powerful kings – to their subjects they were imbued with divine authority and for thousands of years the pharaohs were the focus of Egyptian society. Where did this institution come from and who was the first person to claim the throne? For answers we must sift evidence that takes us back to the very beginnings of history in Egypt, and the life of Pharaoh Narmer. ▶

Illustration by: Joe Cummings

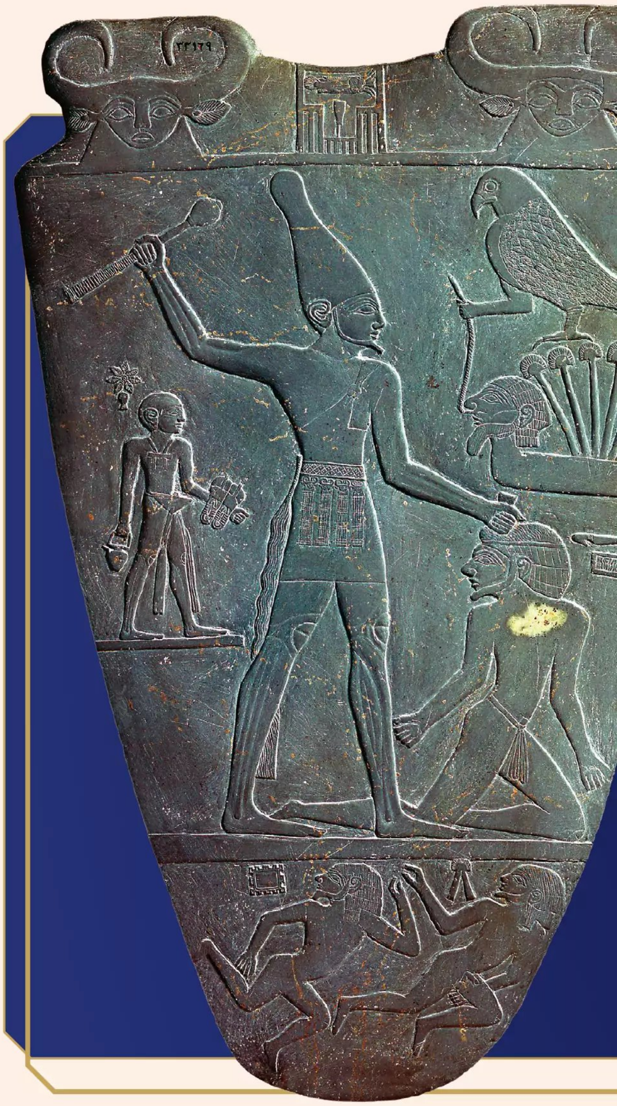
UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT

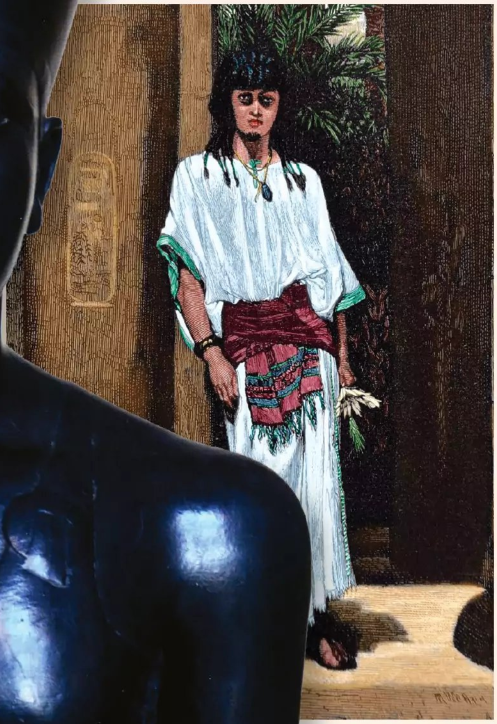
The origins of the ancient Egyptian state can be dated back to around 3150 BCE. Egypt itself had, of course, been inhabited for hundreds of thousands of years but its people appear to have lived in small communities with varying degrees of interaction with other groups. Archaeologists have identified different eras of culture in different areas and different times based on their material remains such as tools, pottery and decorative artefacts.

Artistic influences from Mesopotamia are seen in some of the art of pre-historic Egypt, indicating the Mesopotamian political system of kingship was known to Egyptians. It was only after around 4000 BCE that larger polities evolved, bringing more people under the authority of individual rulers. Over a number of centuries two states coalesced out of the various communities living in Egypt.

Lower Egypt was focused on the fertile delta region where the Nile flows into the Mediterranean. The peoples of this area were agriculturalists who cultivated the relatively well-irrigated land they inhabited. Their rulers were identified by the wearing of a red crown known as the deshret. A much-later list of Egyptian rulers gives names to some of them but little other evidence exists. Archaeological evidence points to Lower Egypt adopting aspects of the culture of neighbouring Upper Egypt over time.

A state developed around the town of Naqada in the Nile valley that became known as Upper Egypt. From around 3400 BCE the people of Upper Egypt had already started marking objects with a serekh, an image of a falcon resting on a rectangle, which denoted royalty, suggesting their rulers were already adopting royal titles and linking their rule to divinity. It is in Upper Egypt that the pictographic writing that later evolved into the hieroglyphs of ancient Egypt were first used, around 3300 BCE, giving us better access to their history. The rulers of Upper Egypt wore a white crown called the hedjet.





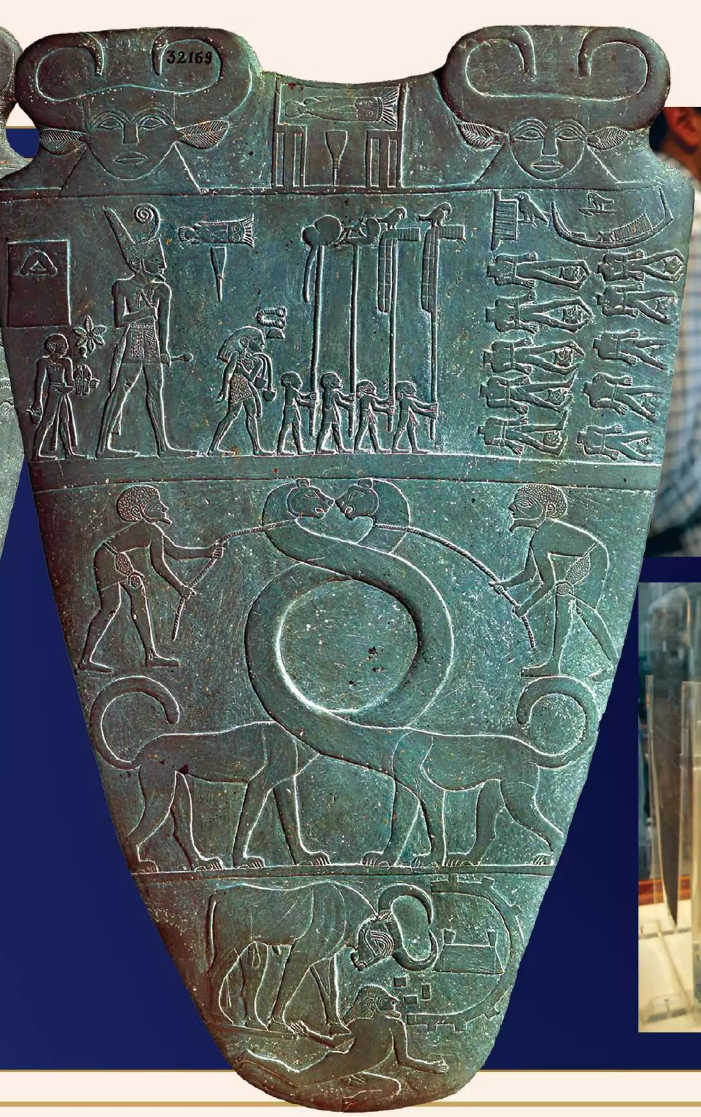
FAR-LEFT Narmer was the model for later generations of Egyptian pharaohs

LEFT A 19th century engraving of the Egyptian king

The final stages of the Naqada culture, around 3200 BCE, provide the best direct evidence of kingship before the formation of the Egyptian state. What we know of them is limited but the name of a king called Iry-Hor has been discovered, as well as a tomb of royal proportions. Iry-Hor seems to have been followed by a king called Ka, whose tomb contains the first example of a royal name joined to the serekh symbol. Egyptologists would dearly like to know what happened next in Upper Egypt but the evidence is difficult to interpret. All we know is that the first pharaoh of a united Egypt appeared soon after the death of Ka.

WHO WAS NARMER?

One of the difficulties of identifying the first pharaoh is that rulers of Egypt, especially in the early years of kingship, were fond of taking several names. In later eras the pharaohs took on the what became known as the "five great names", all different but all referring to the same person. Where the evidence is fragmentary it can be hard



FAR-LEFT The Narmer palette shows him as a heroic figure smiting his enemies, a motif that was copied by generations of later rulers

MIDDLE-LEFT The reverse of the palette shows the pharaoh looking over decapitated foes, as well as exotic beasts being tamed

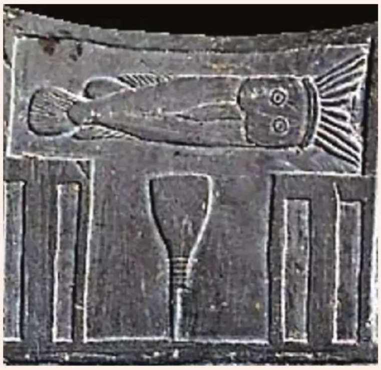
TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT Visitors at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo admire the Narmer palette

> “IT IS IN UPPER EGYPT THAT THE PICTOGRAPHIC WRITING WHICH EVOLVED INTO THE HIEROGLYPHS OF ANCIENT EGYPT WAS FIRST FOUND”

to distinguish whether various names belonged to the same person.

The literary sources about this era of Egypt are all from at least 2500 years after the events they describe. Writing in the late 5th century BCE, the Greek writer Herodotus, who claimed to have learned details from Egyptian priests, says that first pharaoh was a man called Min. Herodotus describes how this Min redirected the River Nile with a dam and built the city of Memphis on the land that was recovered, but gives few other details.

Menes, the Egyptian name for Min, became something of a legendary founder in Egyptian history. It is variously related that he was directly given his kingdom by the gods, introduced the worship of gods to Egypt, invented the hieroglyphs they wrote with, and was even apparently accused by later rulers of addicting Egyptians to luxury. In one tale, when his hunting dogs turned against him Menes escaped the attack by jumping onto the back of a crocodile, which carried him away to safety. Menes later founded the city of Crocodilopolis at the site, yet finding the reality among such legends can be problematic.



ABOVE Narmer’s name is reconstructed from the hieroglyphs associated with him, a catfish and a chisel, which may have meant ‘fighting catfish’.

According to fragments from the Egyptian writer Manetho, living in the 3rd century BCE, Menes was the first king to unite the realms of Upper and Lower Egypt. All we are told about Menes is that he came from a place called Thinis, ruled Egypt for 30 or 60 years, led his armies on a glorious foreign expedition, and died when he was attacked by a hippopotamus. The tombs of kings of Upper Egypt have indeed been found at Abydos, which is very close to Thinis, a startlingly accurate detail in a history written so long after the events.

Archaeologically there are almost no mentions of Menes, even though evidence has been discovered of earlier local kings, and it’s strange that such a significant figure is absent. It may be that Menes was just one of the names of the founder of ancient Egypt, or a title. It seems that Menes means ‘He Who Endures’. Where it has been found on artefacts it is associated

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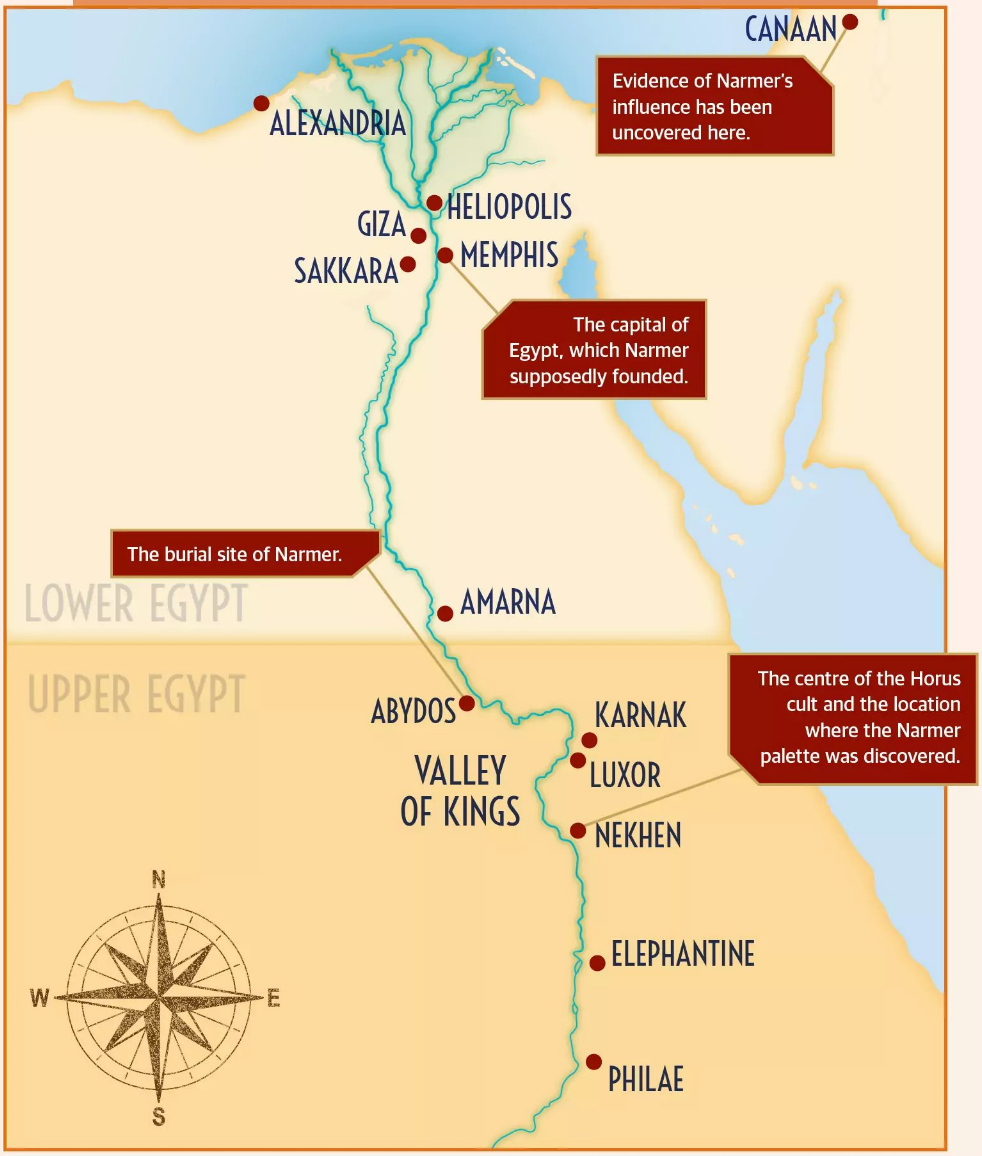
THE TWO EGYPTS

Upper and Lower Egypt were two different realms until Narmer unified them into a single state



Evidence of Narmer's influence has been uncovered here.

The capital of Egypt, which Narmer supposedly founded.

The burial site of Narmer.

The centre of the Horus cult and the location where the Narmer palette was discovered.

with the names of various early pharaohs, so it may have been a title that was passed on between kings. This uncertainty has led historians trying to determine the true first pharaoh of a united Egypt to look for figures who are better represented than a person called Menes in extant remains.

The most commonly cited first pharaoh of Egypt is Narmer, who lived around 3200-3100 BCE and hailed from Upper Egypt. He first came to the notice of archaeologists with the discovery of what is known as the Narmer palette in the Temple of Horus in Nekhen. In the time of Narmer, Nekhen was the central city of Upper Egypt and the Narmer palette was probably ritually deposited in the temple. It belongs to series of artefacts called palettes, which were carved stone slabs in the form of cosmetic 'mixing trays' and densely decorated with imagery.

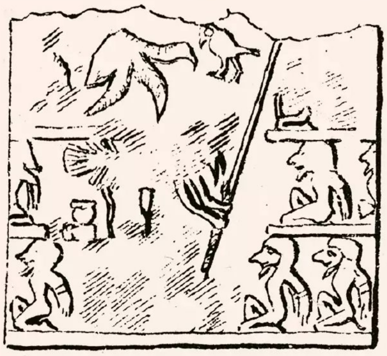
The Narmer palette contains one of the earliest examples of hieroglyphic writing. On it are the serekh symbols of royalty and also the hieroglyphs of a catfish (nr) and a chisel (mr), representing the name Narmer. The name could be interpreted as meaning 'fierce catfish' or 'menacing catfish'. The images carved onto the surface of the palette certainly suggest Narmer was a military power.

On one side of the palette Narmer, wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt, is shown as larger than life-size as he grasps an enemy by the hair and prepares to smite the smaller man with a mace. On the reverse of the palette is another image of Narmer, this time wearing the crown of Lower Egypt, where he is shown in a procession. He is seen walking towards a pile of decapitated bodies with their heads placed between their feet and their genitals mutilated. The palette perhaps marks the first time a king was shown wearing both the traditional crowns of Egypt – suggesting he ruled a unified realm. Some think the palette celebrates Narmer's military conquest of his northern neighbour and so Narmer is considered the first pharaoh of the First Dynasty.

> "THE PALETTE PERHAPS MARKS THE FIRST TIME A KING WAS SHOWN WEARING BOTH OF THE TRADITIONAL CROWNS OF EGYPT"

Some scholars question whether the depiction of Narmer as a conqueror should be taken literally. Egyptian art of later dynasties uniformly shows pharaohs as great warriors, even when recorded history suggests they lost battles or suffered setbacks in war. The Narmer palette may be simply a symbolic object and the real unification occurred more slowly and though economic and cultural domination. The sudden rise of references to Narmer in Lower Egypt, however, points to the unification being a swift and probably military affair.

Found at the same site as the palette was a stone macehead with similarly grand imagery of kingship. On the mace Narmer, identified by name again, is shown sitting



RIGHT This damaged cylinder seal shows a catfish, symbolising Narmer, wielding a weapon over figures of bound Libyan captives

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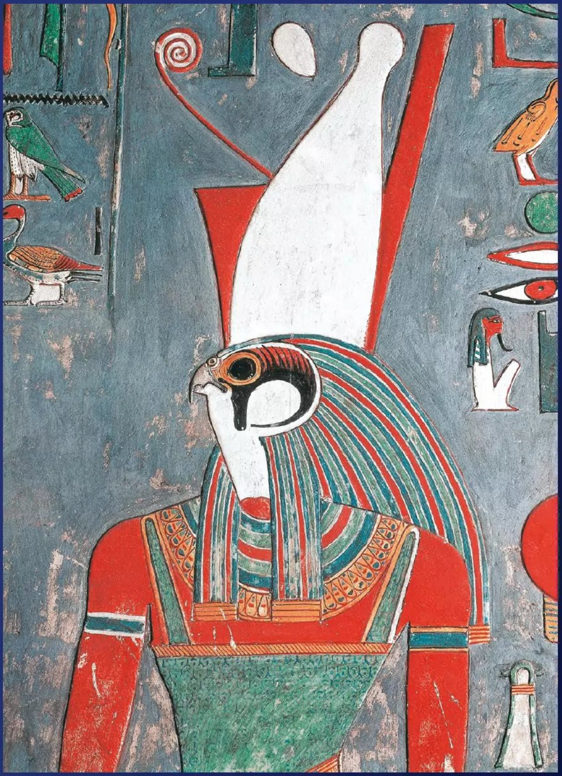
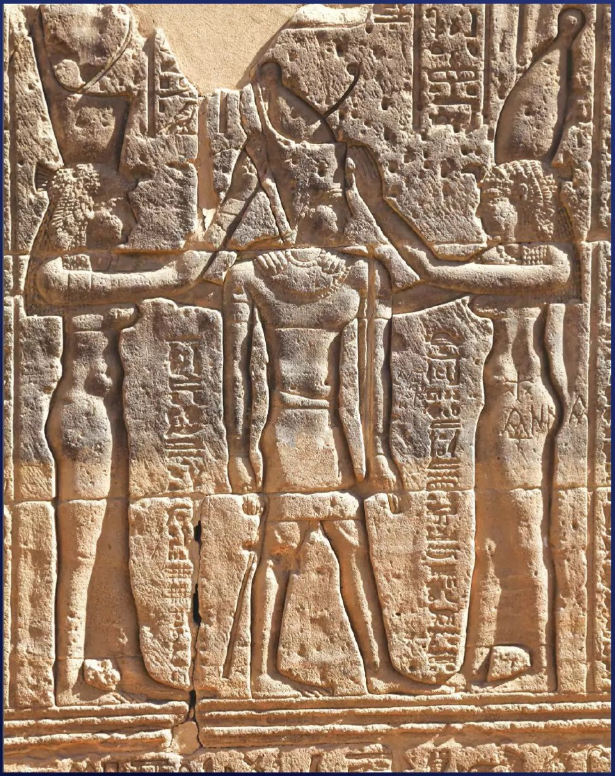


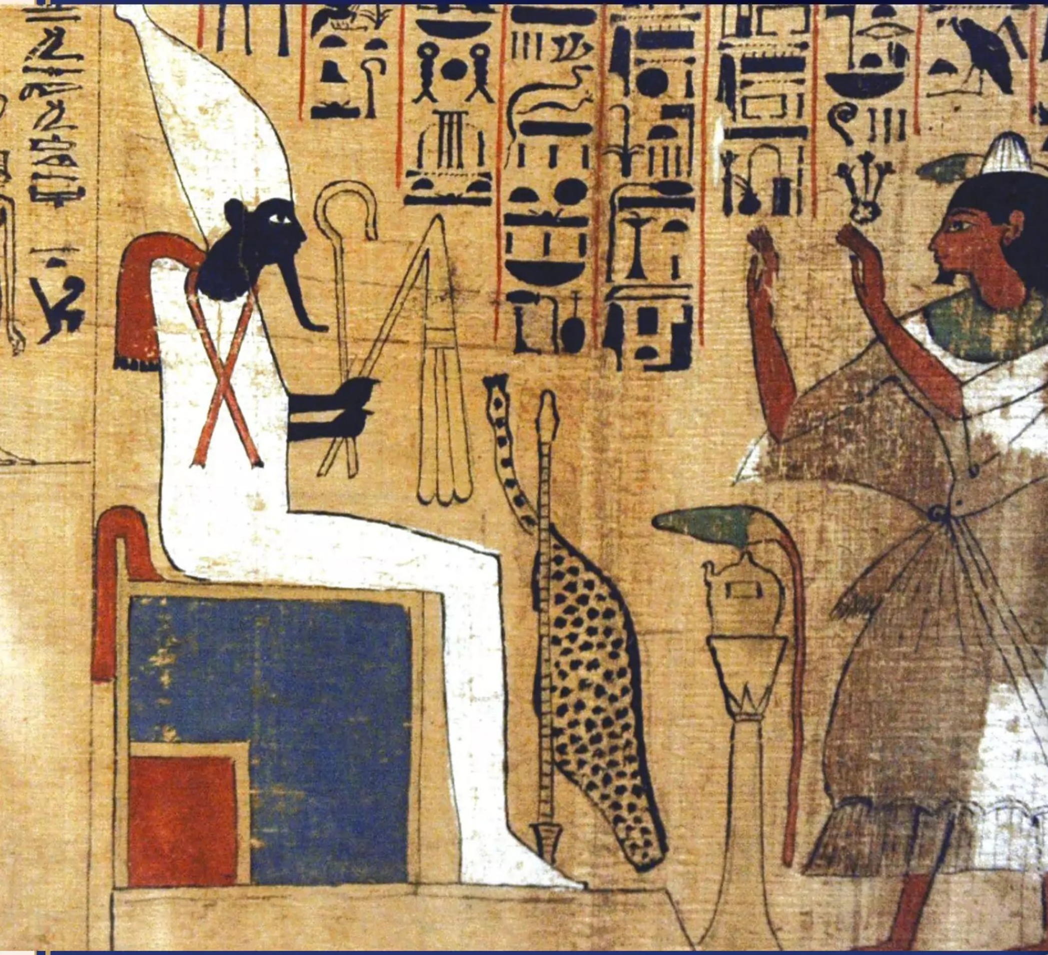


FAR-LEFT The god Horus, who represented the concept of kingship, was often depicted wearing the united crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt

LEFT This carving at the Temple of Philae in Aswan depicts Narmer unifying Egypt

BELOW-LEFT The Egyptian god Osiris wearing the Hedjet, white crown of Upper Egypt

BELOW A baboon statue that bears the name of Narmer from around the time of his reign



on a throne and wearing the crown of Lower Egypt. Captives and booty are led before the throne to represent Narmer's supreme position.

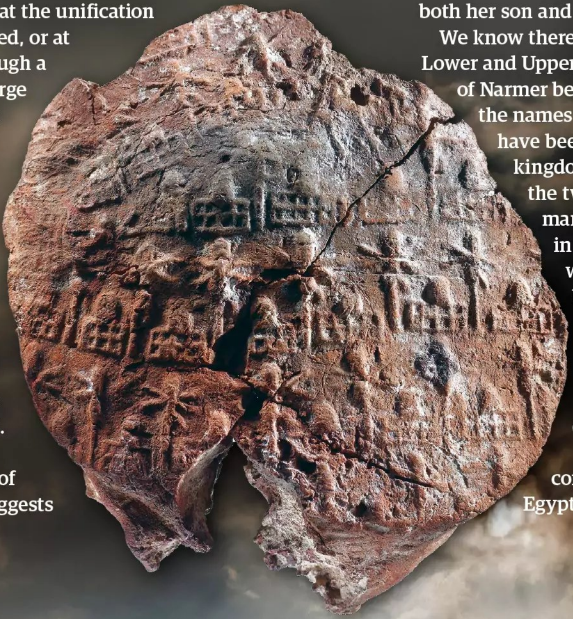
A second set of maceheads is decorated with a pharaoh, identified only with the symbol of a scorpion, who is shown at different times wearing the two crowns. Who this pharaoh was, and their relationship to Narmer, is still unclear. The 'Scorpion King', as this figure is known, may simply be Narmer under another name. Both the scorpion and the catfish names seem to be showing the animal strength of the pharaoh.

The best evidence that Narmer was the first ruler of the united Egypt comes from a stone seal produced by another king of the First Dynasty, Den. The names of five pharaohs ending with Den are on this seal, and Narmer is the first on the list.

Projecting power

Based on the images of Narmer subduing enemies with a mace and viewing his captives and slain enemies, we can surmise that Narmer's unification of Egypt was achieved militarily. On the Narmer palette the figure shown being grasped by the hair is labelled Wash. It may be that the final ruler of Lower Egypt before Narmer's conquest was named Wash, though this is at best a conjecture as Wash is not known from any other source.

There are hints that the unification of Egypt was achieved, or at least solidified, through a marriage. When a large mastaba tomb, a flat structure made of mudbricks, was explored in the 19th century it was discovered that it had once housed a royal lady. Inscriptions on artefacts showed the name Neithhotep with the royal serekh symbol. The goddess Neith was the protectress of Lower Egypt and suggests she originated there. This Neithhotep was the wife of Narmer, as revealed by objects within her tomb, and it has been suggested that the pair married to signify the union between Upper and Lower Egypt. Neithhotep must have been a powerful influence in the state as her name was found in the tombs of both her son and grandson.



BELOW A pottery fragment with the symbols for Neithhotep, the wife of Narmer. Other finds suggest she remained influential under his successors

We know there was trade between Lower and Upper Egypt before the time of Narmer because artefacts bearing the names of his predecessors have been found in both kingdoms. The unification of the two realms, however, marks a dramatic increase in the range of places where royal engravings bearing Narmer's name have been found, revealing he had more influence in Upper Egypt than any who came before him.

Narmer was not content with unifying Egypt: it seems he led his

BELOW The desolate remains of Memphis, Narmer's capital

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TIMELINE

The exact dates are unclear but we can reconstruct a summary of Narmer's era

3200 BCE

Iry-Hor is the first king of Upper Egypt known by name.

3170 BCE

King Ka of Upper Egypt begins to spread the influence of his realm.

3150 BCE

Narmer becomes king of Upper Egypt.

3140 BCE

Narmer conquers Lower Egypt, uniting Upper and Lower Egypt under his control. He marries Neithhotep, founding the First Dynasty of Egyptian pharaohs.

3120 BCE

Narmer dies and is buried in Abydos. The throne passes to Hor-Aha, who's possibly his son.

2900 BCE

The First Dynasty ends in obscure circumstances, but the rule of the pharaohs continues.

forces into lands beyond the traditional borders of the two kingdoms. A cylinder seal – a carved stone used to roll out images and texts – has been discovered that shows Narmer in the form of a catfish beating down captive Libyans. The power of Egypt also appears to have grown through increased trade with other nations, possibly backed by armed incursions.

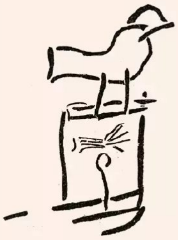
Archaeological digs in ancient Canaanite sites, in modern Palestine, have turned up pottery fragments marked with the name of Narmer in greater numbers than from the periods before him. Manetho mentions foreign wars in relation to Menes, and a site known as Tell es-Sakan in the Gaza Strip contains the remains of a fortified settlement from around the time of Narmer constructed with typical Egyptian techniques. It may have been used as a base for an army, or a guard post to protect trade routes. If Narmer did conquer Canaan then his successors lost it, as material from Egypt rapidly decreases in the years following the end of his reign.

The details of Narmer's reign, including the exact dates, are lost to history and his death at the hands of a hippopotamus is very probably a legend. We do, however, know where he was buried. At Abydos, several tombs cut into the ground and lined with mud bricks were unearthed in 1890. Unfortunately, most of them had been robbed, apparently repeatedly, in antiquity and piecing together who they belonged to took careful excavation.

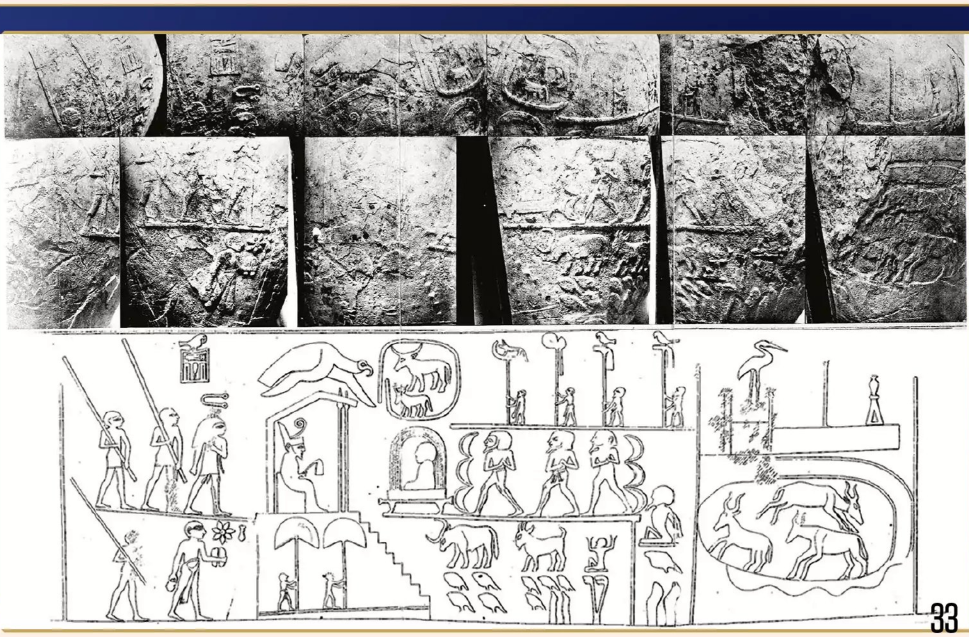
Compared to the grand tombs of later pharaohs these were simple and small affairs. Sifting through the remains scattered in one tomb turned up pottery fragments and wooden labels marked with Narmer's name. Inside this tomb there were flint blades and arrowheads suggestive of a warrior's burial, and there were also fragments of ebony which would have been imported at great expense. The tomb is relatively small at just 7m by 3m but is near to tombs belonging to later pharaohs. Given the size of this burial chamber some archaeologists refuse to accept that it belonged to a king of Narmer's stature, theorising that it may just be one chamber of a complex and the true location of the tomb remains to be discovered. If this was a tomb designed to be the eternal home of Narmer's remains it was a failure – no trace of a body was discovered there (though the process of artificial mummification was in its infancy during Narmer's lifetime).

While Narmer's corpse may not have survived, the kingdom that he forged proved to be long-lasting and he was the model for generations of pharaohs.

> "THERE ARE HINTS THAT THE UNIFICATION OF EGYPT WAS ACHIEVED, OR AT LEAST SOLIDIFIED, THROUGH A MARRIAGE"



ABOVE This serekh of Narmer, topped with the falcon of Horus. Marks such as this have been discovered beyond the borders of Egypt



BELOW The Narmer macehead shows the pharaoh on his throne surrounded by what appear to be subjects presenting resources to him

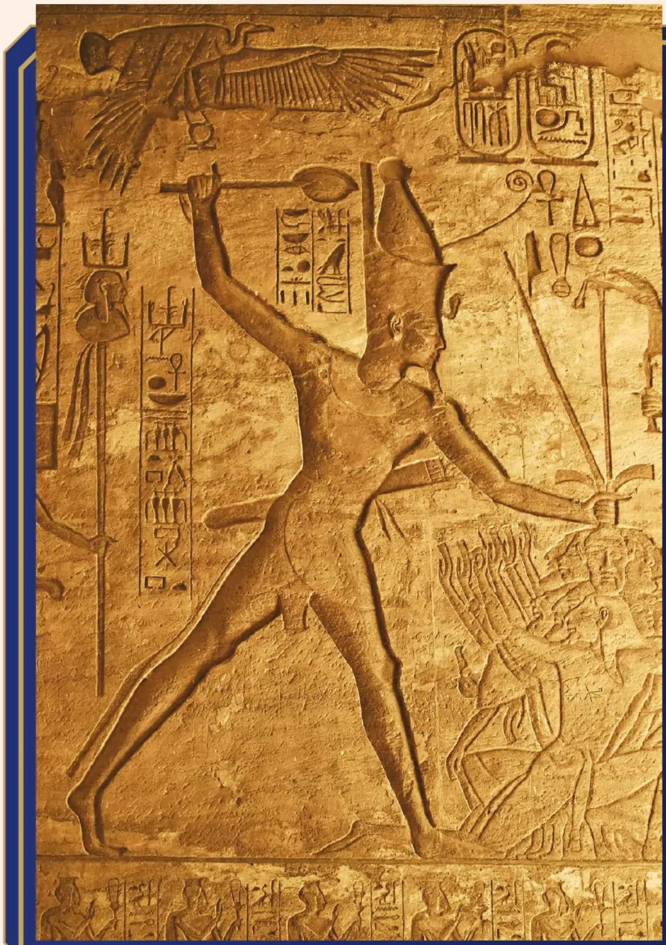
FOUNDATION OF MEMPHIS

Did Narmer lay the foundations for one of the greatest cities in ancient Egypt?

Memphis was the capital city of ancient Egypt during the early dynasties and remained culturally important after that period thanks to its temples and monuments. Its location at the mouth of the Nile Delta made it an ideal location for a capital as it enabled trade along the Nile and easy access to food supplies.

According to Egyptian priest Manetho and Greek historian Herodotus, writing thousands of years after the events they describe, Memphis was built by the pharaoh they call Menes. They describe how Menes diverted the Nile from its course to provide a suitable location for the city to be built. Since Menes is generally thought to be another name for Narmer, is he linked to the foundation of Memphis?

The city was known by the ancient Egyptians as White Walls, and a discovery in 2012 proves that Narmer could not have founded Memphis. An inscription was found mentioning how king Iry-Hor visited White Walls. Iry-Hor lived two generations before Narmer, so could not have visited a city built by the latter. It may be that Narmer made additions to Memphis or seated some of his administration there, and this is what later historians are recalling.



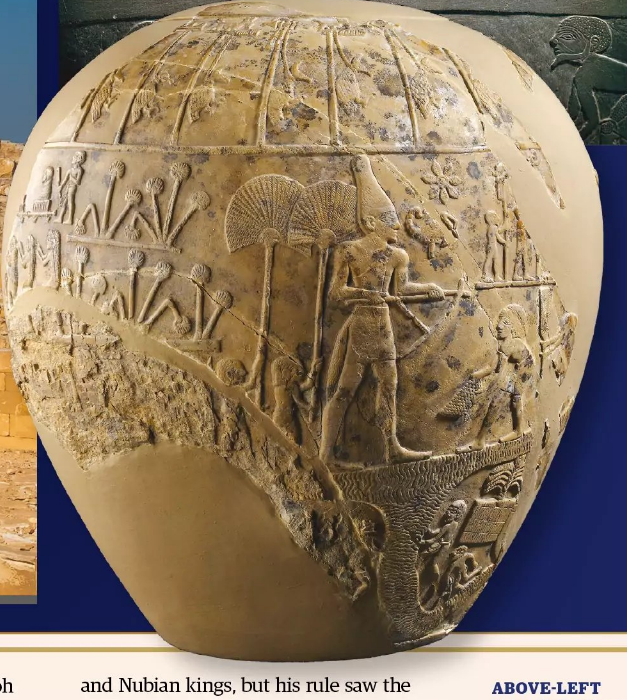
A NEW FORM OF KINGSHIP

Narmer left his heirs a unified kingdom and a way of presenting their authority. The Narmer palette that shows the pharaoh wearing the crowns of the two Egypts, signifying his rule of both, pointed the way towards how all later Egyptian rulers were depicted. Within three generations the pharaohs of the First Dynasty had joined aspects of the red crown and the white crown into a single crown known as the Pa-sekhemty, meaning 'the two powerful ones'.

Egyptian art was already developing into a style that endured for millennia by the time of Narmer's rule but he seems to have employed it as a force of propaganda more thoroughly than his predecessors. The Narmer palette, and probably other examples that have not survived, set the standards for how a pharaoh was to be shown. When a pharaoh is depicted he is always far larger than any other individuals in the scene, sometimes ten-times the size. He is shown physically subduing enemies, or in a warrior pose, or surrounded by the regalia of his throne. Narmer was regarded as the founder of cities and many later pharaohs are shown driving a plough, a stylistic depiction of laying the foundations of new city. The names of gods or their symbols are close to hand, showing his divine right to rule.

Narmer is closely associated with the worship of the god Horus – the palette of Narmer was discovered in the remains of the temple of Horus at Nekhen. It may be that Narmer used worship of this god as a unifying state religion to help tie his new kingdoms together. Horus, often shown as a falcon-headed man wearing the Pa-sekhemty crown, was the god of kingship. In time, the pharaoh himself

> "NARMER LEFT HIS HEIRS A UNIFIED KINGDOM TO RULE OVER AND ALSO BEQUEATHED THEM A WAY OF PRESENTING THEIR AUTHORITY"



would be imagined as the personification of Horus on Earth.

Religion proved to be key to the idea of kingship in ancient Egypt. While priests became increasingly powerful in Egyptian society, it was the pharaoh who acted as the link between humanity and the gods. Ceremonies on which the security of the state were thought to depend were focused on the pharaoh and involved him performing certain rituals. To threaten the pharaoh was to threaten the stability of the universe as the Egyptians conceived it.

A recent discovery of a rock carving near Aswan dating from around the time of Narmer shows a king with regalia leading an expedition of boats along the Nile. The king's boat is marked with a falcon, the symbol of Horus, and may relate the event depicted to a well-known royal tradition. Every two years the pharaoh travelled on a progress through his realm, known as the Following of Horus, to count the number of livestock owned by his people to assess the taxes they owed.

If the king in these carvings is indeed Narmer it shows a sophisticated model of kingship was already forming at this early stage of Egyptian history. The pharaoh was not only a warrior, as Narmer is depicted on the Narmer palette, but also an organiser of the state's resources. The glorious achievements we are familiar with from Egypt would not have been possible if the pharaoh had been unable to marshal the goods and labour of his people.

If Narmer's tomb was the small, brick-lined chamber archaeologists discovered, then it marks the end of an older style of kingship. The immediate successors of Narmer built tombs with many rooms and richer offerings, and within a few generations the tombs of pharaohs were moved into above-ground mastaba structures of ever greater scale. In the Third Dynasty, just a few hundred years after Narmer's unification of Egypt, the first pyramids were being constructed. Nothing on the scale of the pyramids would have been possible without the resources of a united Egypt. Without the pharaoh being considered a sacred leader there would have been no impulse to construct such elaborate tombs.

Narmer is at the heart of Egyptian history. His ideas of kingship may have been derived from earlier Mesopotamian and Nubian kings, but his rule saw the advent of many of the most iconic aspects of Egyptian civilisation. We may never know the full details of Narmer's reign but new hints are emerging as more discoveries are made. Even 5,000 years after he died Narmer continues to surprise us.

FURTHER READING
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ABOVE-LEFT This relief of Pharaoh Ramesses II dates from nearly 2,000 years after the time of Narmer but uses the artistic conventions developed under the first pharaoh

ABOVE-MIDDLE The Step Pyramid of Djoser was built over 300 years after the reign of Narmer

TOP The Narmer palette identifies him by name and shows him wearing the red crown of Lower Egypt

ABOVE The Scorpion King macehead may depict an earlier king of Upper Egypt, or it may represent Narmer without referring to his name

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The Legend of LADY GODIVA

How the story of a naked noblewoman on horseback became one of England's most pervasive myths

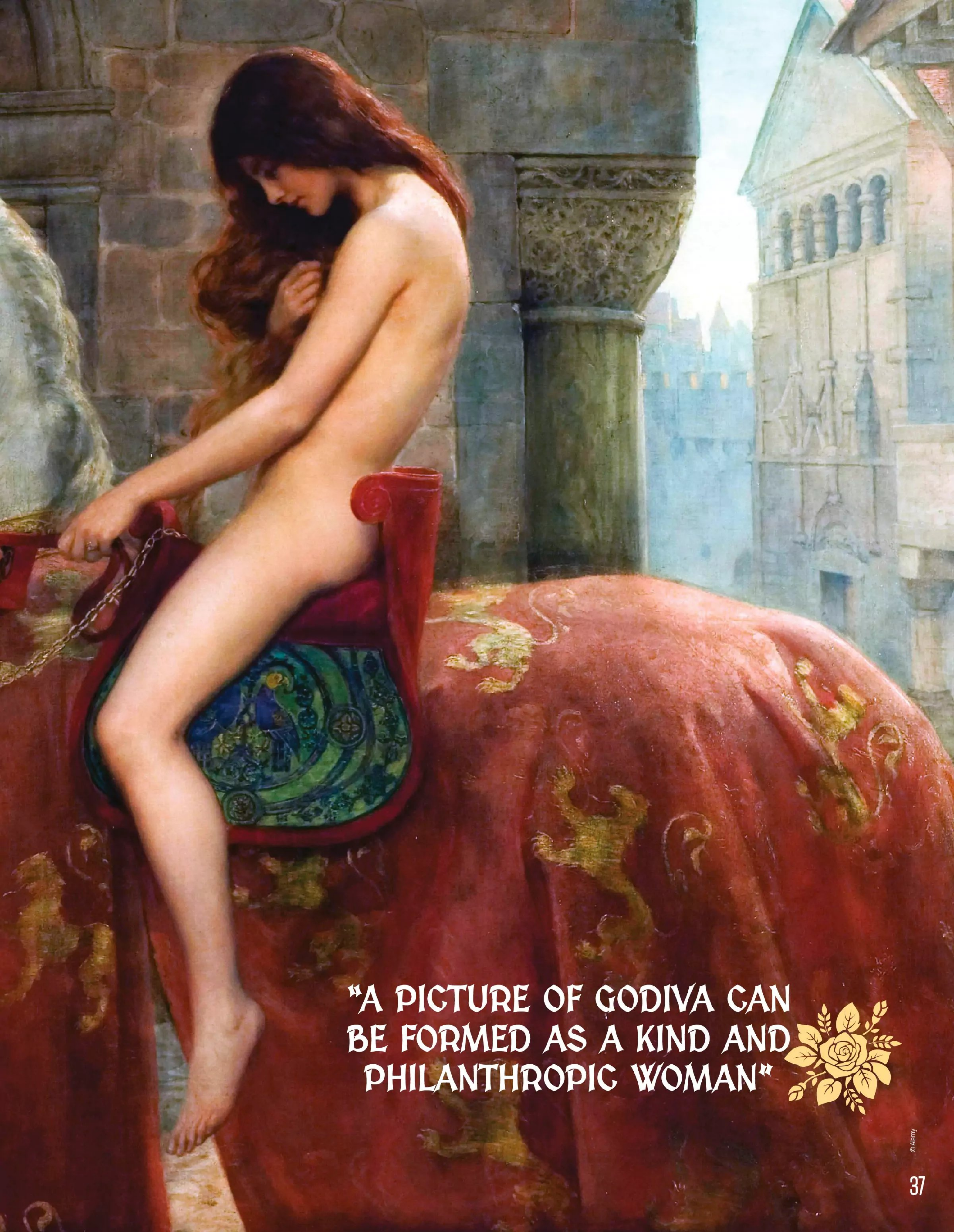
Written by Emily Staniforth

In the mid-11th century, the parsimonious Earl of Mercia ruled over Coventry and nearby towns and villages in the west Midlands of Anglo-Saxon England. He'd imposed a heavy tax on the people of Coventry, one that his wife, Lady Godiva, found to be greatly unjust. She begged and pleaded with him to repeal the tax, but to no avail.

Godiva continued to petition the earl day after day, week after week, until finally he answered her demands with a proposition. He suggested that if Godiva was willing to undress, mount her horse and ride naked through the streets of Coventry, from one end of the town's market to the other, he would acquiesce to her wishes. Godiva, determined to do whatever was necessary to help her people, agreed to her husband's demand.

Godiva issued a proclamation to the residents of Coventry, asking them to shut their doors and stay inside their houses as she paraded through the streets. Then, honouring her word, she stripped off and mounted her steed. Her long and luscious hair was let down and cascaded down her body, protecting her dignity from potential onlookers. She set off, accompanied by two knights, and as she rode through Coventry the people of the town obeyed her command and shut themselves away, refusing to look upon Godiva as she passed by.

The ride passed without incident and Godiva returned to her husband to claim her prize. Shocked that his wife had ▶



"A PICTURE OF GODIVA CAN BE FORMED AS A KIND AND PHILANTHROPIC WOMAN"

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Peeping Tom

This mischievous character did not appear in the legend until the 17th century

There have been many additions and changes to the Godiva story over the centuries, but none have made such a permanent impression as the inclusion of the character known as Peeping Tom. The previously unknown character was added to the story of Lady Godiva's ride some time during the 17th century and became such a compelling aspect of the tale that his presence remained steadfast in later retellings of the legend.

The adapted story tells of Tom the Tailor, a resident of Coventry, hearing of Lady Godiva's proclamation asking the townspeople not to look at her as she rode through the market. Shut away in his house, Tom, however, was unable to resist the temptation to take a peek at the nude noblewoman as she passed by. But when he peeped through the shutters of his window, he didn't catch a glimpse of Godiva and instead was instantly struck blind as punishment for his lechery. And so the legend of Peeping Tom was born.

Some historians have argued that the story of Peeping Tom and his dishonourable behaviour was added to the tale to help provide a moral angle to the myth. By failing to respect the honour and virtue of Godiva, he was punished by a higher power. However, other researchers have theorised that the character was added to the story as a result of a painting from 1586 that supposedly depicts a shadowy figure watching Godiva's ride from an upstairs window.

Either way, Peeping Tom has arguably become a bigger star in modern society than the legend's protagonist. The term 'Peeping Tom' has become a common expression in the English language and is defined by the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary as "a pruriently prying person" or "voyeur".

fulfilled her side of the bargain, the earl had little choice but to put an end to the oppressive tax and free the people of Coventry from their financial burden.

This tale has, over the centuries, become one of Britain's best-loved historical legends, akin to the stories of Robin Hood and King Arthur. Like these other mythical tales, the legend of Lady Godiva is rooted in fact – but how much of it is actually true and how much has been invented over the years? And how did this story of feminine courage and determination become so ingrained in British popular imagination?

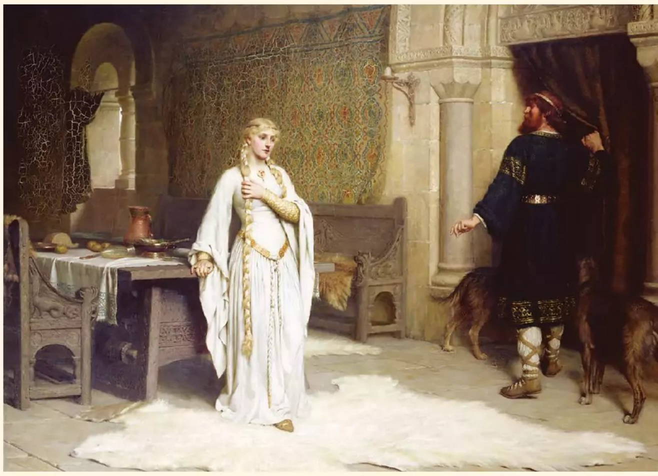
The real Lady Godiva

Historians have determined that Lady Godiva was, in fact, a real medieval noblewoman who lived in Coventry at the time her famous naked ride is said to have taken place. In many medieval sources, Godiva is alternatively known as Godgifu, a name meaning 'God's Gift' in Anglo Saxon. The first mention of Godiva, or Godgifu, in English records can be found in the *Domesday Book* of 1086, which records her as a prominent landowner – land associated with her is mentioned 52 times. However, these accounts are scarce in their detail and don't provide us with much descriptive information about her. More intriguing documentation about Godiva's life can be discovered in the chronicle of John of Worcester, the *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, written around the end of the 11th century, in which Godiva is identified as the wife of Leofric, Earl of Mercia – the same earl mentioned in the legend.

Leofric was, in many ways, a much more significant figure than his wife in Anglo-Saxon England. As the Earl of Mercia, he was one of the four most powerful men in the land. At the head of this group was England's king, four of whom were on the throne during Leofric's tenure as Earl of Mercia: Cnut (died 1035), Harold Harefoot (died 1040), Harthacnut (died 1042) and Edward the Confessor (died 1066). Underneath these various kings were England's three most powerful earls: the Earl of Northumberland, the Earl of Wessex and, last but not least, the Earl of Mercia. As Earl of Mercia, Leofric was influential in Anglo-Saxon politics and played key roles in ensuring the stability of England's throne and protecting the king from internal and external threats.

In the *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, John of Worcester says of Leofric: "During his whole life, this earl's sagacity was of the utmost advantage to the kings and the whole commonwealth of England." While his political importance is mentioned, it's another aspect of his life that makes up most of John of Worcester's description. Great pains were taken by the monk to stress the significance of Leofric's religious donations throughout his life. But it's not just Leofric's generosity that was lauded, it was his wife's too.

From John of Worcester's chronicle, a picture of Godiva can be formed as a kind and philanthropic woman. Between her



RIGHT Lady Godiva and Leofric were said to be a generous couple, donating land and money to several religious establishments

OPPOSITE Godiva's nude ride through Coventry became part of English folklore

and Leofric, a number of significant endowments are mentioned as having been made to various ecclesiastical sites around the kingdom of Mercia. In fact, John of Worcester reports that Godiva was "a worshipper of God, and devoted friend of St Mary, Ever-a-Virgin", highlighting that her piety formed a great part of her identity and how she was seen by others during her lifetime and immediately after. Of the noteworthy donations made, Godiva and Leofric gave gold, silver and jewels to monasteries at Wenlock and Leominster and land to a monastery in Worcester, as well as making contributions to other monasteries in Mercia. The couple also founded the monastery at Coventry, "amply endowing it with lands on their own patrimony, had so enriched with all kinds of ornament, that no monastery could be found in England possessed of such abundance of gold, silver, jewels and precious stones as it contained at that time", according to John of Worcester's account.

While Godiva's religious patronage is undoubtedly impressive, what is arguably more so is the fact that by the time she was recorded in the *Domesday Book* she was a major landholder in her own right. As with most medieval women, details of her life are vague, but the land she held provides some insight into her life and background. Leofric died in 1057, leaving Godiva widowed, and she would almost certainly have inherited her husband's land. But historians have also posited that much of her property was inherited from her own family and that she had brought significant holdings to her marriage. So it's likely that Godiva came from a wealthy and prominent family.

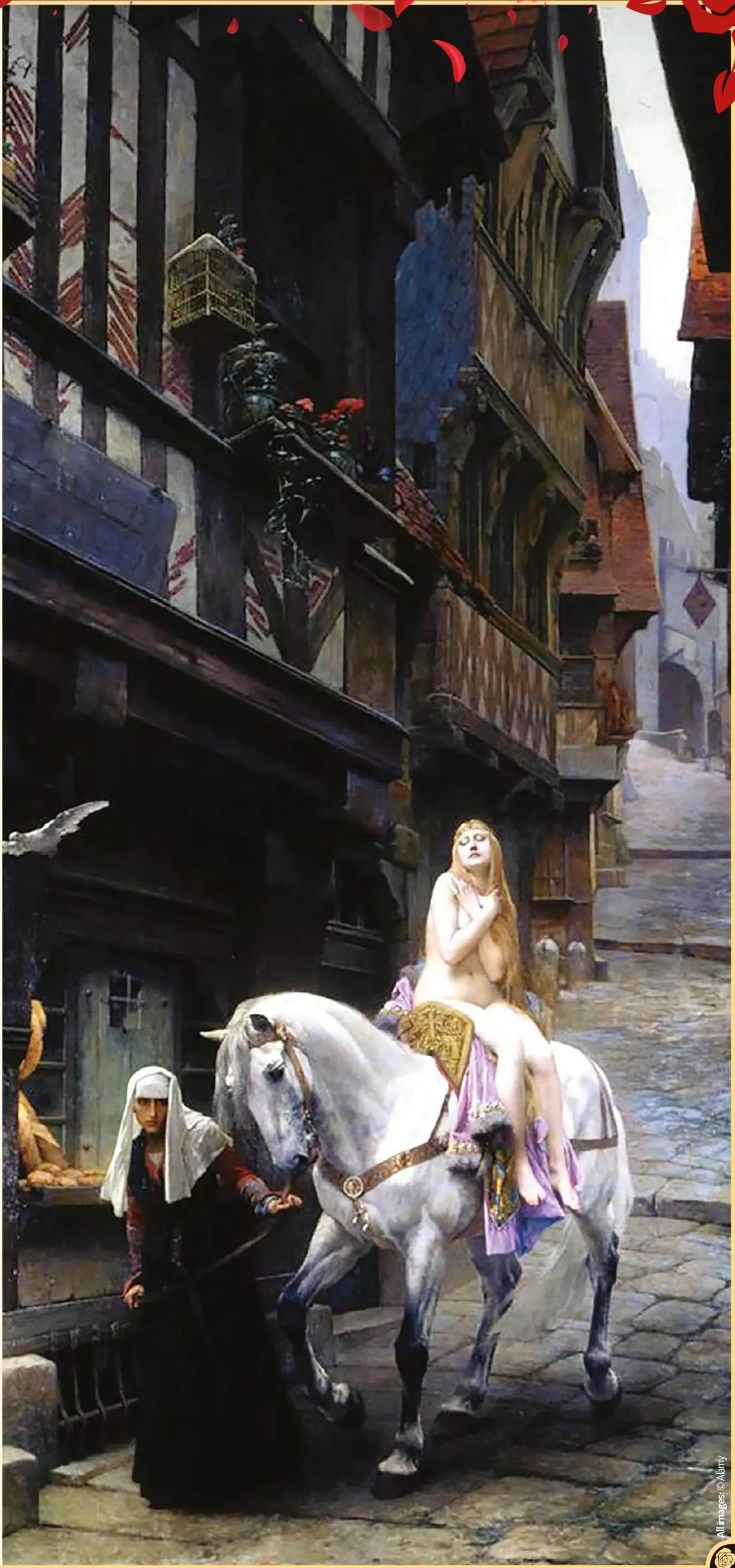
"IT REMAINS A MYSTERY AS TO WHERE ROGER OF WENDOVER FIRST CONCEIVED THIS TALE"

Despite the evidence that Godiva was a landowner in her own right, it's impossible to say how much political power and influence she would've been able to exercise. However, in the *Domesday Book* (recorded 20 years after the Norman Conquest of 1066) she is listed as one of only three English landowners – an impressive feat for a woman of that era – although she'd almost certainly died before the completion of this census.

If the real Lady Godiva was an admirable and wealthy woman of her time, it's puzzling that she's only remembered for her naked ride. Yet none of the early sources, where information regarding her identity has been discovered, mention such an event. As a result, many historians think it's highly unlikely that it ever happened.

Development of the myth

If none of the earlier sources mention Lady Godiva's ride, where did the story come from? The first description of the event has been found by historians in another medieval chronicle – the *Flores Historiarum,* written by Roger of Wendover, a monk at St Albans Abbey, in the early 13th century. Roger of Wendover's account tells of Godiva's determination to rid the people of Coventry of the unfair tax, Leofric's proposition and the ride itself. While all these elements are recognisable from the story as we recall it today, it remains a mystery as to where Roger of Wendover first conceived this tale. He may have invented it himself or he may have heard it from somewhere else. Some historians have even suggested the legend could have been passed down through generations via oral storytelling, and as such its true origins remain unclear.



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Godiva in Coventry

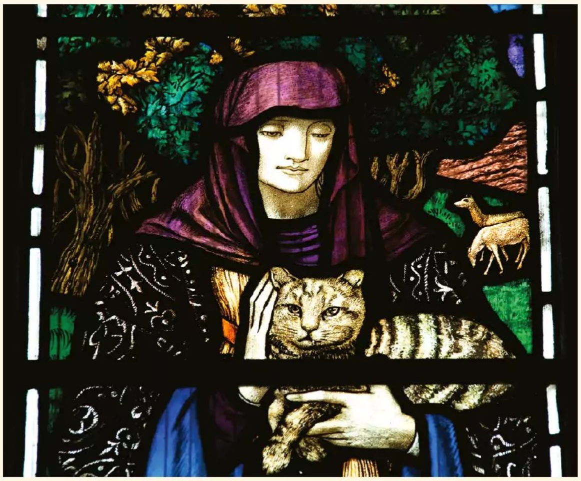
How the medieval heroine is remembered in her home city

For Coventry, Lady Godiva still looms large. In the city's long history, it is the image of a naked woman on horseback that has arguably come to be most associated with the area's heritage. To pay homage to its most famous resident, annual Lady Godiva processions that re-enacted the legend through the streets of Coventry were held from 1678 onwards. Nowadays, Godiva's name is prolific in the city, with an annual music festival – the Godiva Festival – held in one of the city's parks.

Positioned in the centre of Coventry is a more permanent commemoration of Lady Godiva and her famous ride. Unveiled in 1949, the Self Sacrifice statue (also known as the Lady Godiva statue) is a bronze sculpture depicting the nude heroine on horseback, as if she were processing through the city. It's mounted on a plinth inscribed with the words of Tennyson's *Godiva* poem, and stands as a steadfast reminder of Coventry's best-known legend.

OWEN OWEN
BOVIS

It's difficult to determine the veracity of the Godiva story given historical accounts of both Godiva and Leofric are at odds with their behaviour as described by Roger of Wendover: Leofric was known to be financially generous and Godiva is believed to have had some power and influence as a landholder. Unfortunately, it's unlikely that we will ever know whether the story is in any way true, although, given the lack of evidence, most historians conclude it's almost certainly fictional. Regardless of its accuracy, the legend began with Roger of Wendover's chronicle, written over a century after Godiva's death.



LEFT This stained-glass window in a church in Woolhope, Herefordshire, is believed to depict Lady Godiva

OPPOSITE-TOP So intertwined is Godiva's identity with the legend, very few artistic depictions of her show her clothed

OPPOSITE-BOTTOM The Self Sacrifice Statue, better known as the Lady Godiva statue, stands in the centre of Coventry

> "IN AN AGE OF CHIVALRIC VALUES, GODIVA WAS THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF A RARE FEMALE CHAMPION"

In his original version, one aspect of the story, as it tends to be recounted in the modern day, is not present: Godiva never asks the people of Coventry to avoid looking at her. Instead, her long thick hair acts as a veil that covers her entirely except for her legs. The addition of her proclamation and the townspeople hiding away during the ride was not introduced to the tale until Richard Grafton's *Chronicle of England* was published in 1569. Many other later printed versions of Lady Godiva's legend include similar added details, contributing to the development of the myth as each author and chronicler took their turn in adapting the tale. It's possible that Grafton's addition of the proclamation intended to reclaim some of Lady Godiva's dignity in an age of increasing religious modesty.

Following the first recounting of the Godiva story, the legend took off and became an increasingly popular tale during the Middle Ages. Godiva's femininity, strength and bravery appealed to the noblewomen of Europe, who recognised her as a romantic heroine, willing to sacrifice her dignity for the good of others. In an age of chivalric values, Godiva was the perfect example of a rare female champion among a sea of brave knights and dashing gentlemen.

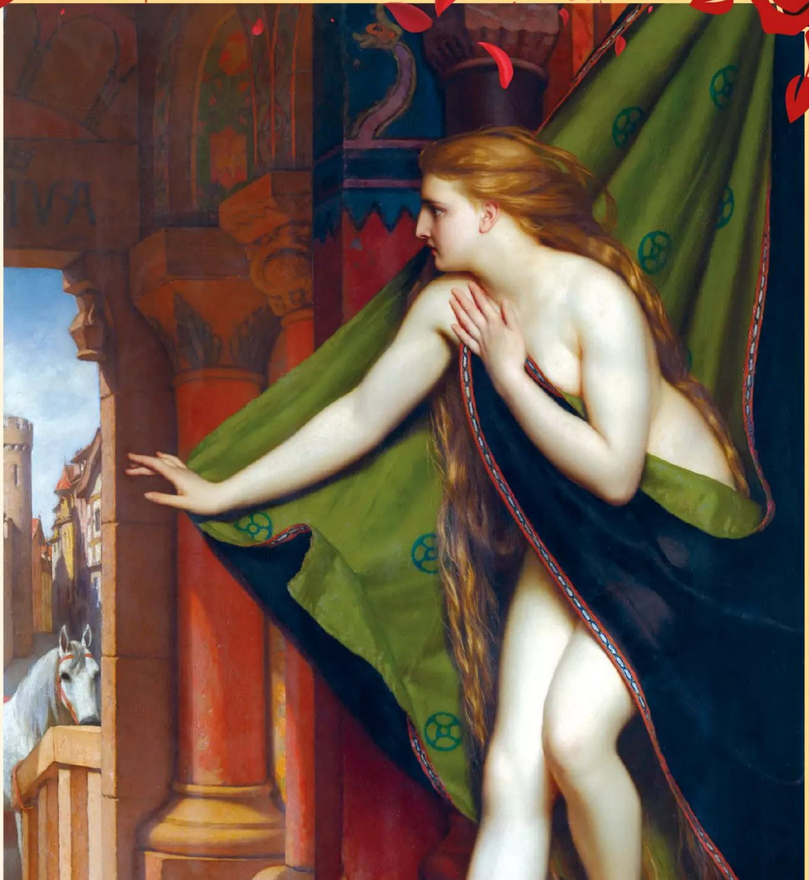
Though the popularity of the tale waned for a couple of centuries following the medieval period, the story never truly disappeared. Experiencing a revival during the late 18th and 19th centuries, the legend was beloved by Romantic and pre-Raphaelite poets, writers and painters looking to the past for inspiration. Lady Godiva and her ride became the focus of many beautiful works of art and literature that showed her in all her imagined beauty, often with a noble white steed, and as a result, her identity became even more entwined with the story. An increasing number of people were exposed to the legend through these works, in particular through Alfred Tennyson's 1840 poem *Godiva*, which retells the story of the ride. The poem ends with Tennyson purporting that by completing the ride Godiva "took the tax away and built herself an everlasting name." Ironically, it was Tennyson's poem that contributed to the ingraining of Godiva's memory in English culture.

Inspired by Tennyson's poem, an abundance of artwork depicting Godiva's ride flourished, contributing to the increasing traction of the legend. Scenes from the poem became common fodder for artists and the myth came to life in a way it had never done before. Godiva became the ultimate romantic heroine with a legacy that even managed to persist throughout the Victorian era, when attitudes towards decency, sexuality and nudity were prudish to say the least. Victorian artists continued to portray Godiva in all her glory, though many did so by posing her in ways that covered her modesty. In fact, the most famous image of Lady Godiva – the title image of this article – was painted by Victorian artist John Collier in 1897.

Legacy of Lady Godiva

Through renewed interest in the Lady Godiva legend and the prevalence of her striking image in art and literature throughout the centuries, the memory of this medieval woman has persisted despite the odds. Even up to the present day, Lady Godiva continues to appear in popular culture as a recognisable figure. A black-and-white silent short picture from 1911 first brought the Godiva legend to film, while an American movie from 1955, *Lady Godiva of Coventry*, starring Hollywood actress Maureen O'Hara in the titular role, saw the story appear on the big screen. References to Godiva have also permeated music over the last century, with her name being used in the titles of songs by Peter and Gordon (in 1966) and the Velvet Underground (in 1968). Most famously of all, she's mentioned in the lyrics of Queen's *Don't Stop Me Now* (1978): "I'm a racing car, passing by like Lady Godiva."

In many ways, it's unfortunate that the memory of Lady Godiva has come to be associated with an imagined event rather than the philanthropic and religious activities that occupied her life. But, in other ways, the remarkable tale of her ride has commemorated her when the legacies of many other extraordinary medieval women have been lost. In truth, we do not know who Lady Godiva really was. What she looked like, her personality and many other details of her life have disappeared. But for this fictional story to have become so intertwined with her identity, it's safe to say that she must have been an extraordinary person. The records of her generosity most likely influenced the magnanimous fictional version of her that we remember today, fighting for the rights of the people who considered her their superior. It's possible that the heroic aspect of Godiva's story, resonating with people down the ages, saw the myth grow and spread from one small mention in a medieval chronicle to become one of the foundational tales of English folklore.



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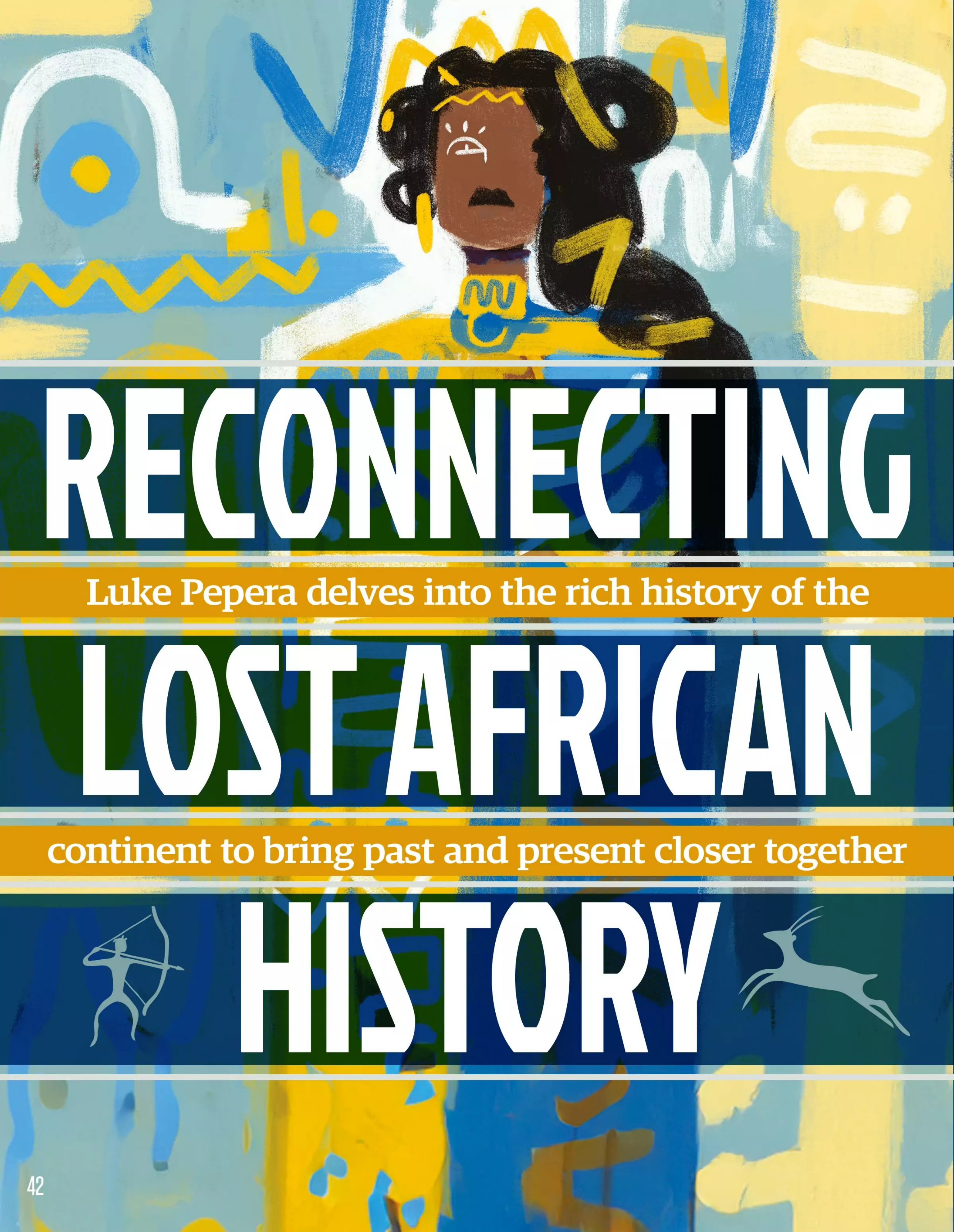


RECONNECTING LOST AFRICAN HISTORY

Luke Pepera delves into the rich history of the continent to bring past and present closer together

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

Africa remains an understudied continent in historical fields, despite efforts by many historians, archaeologists and anthropologists to correct that imbalance. As the birthplace of humanity, it seems only logical that we should continue striving to create a more complete map of human experience on the continent. In his new book, *Motherland: A Journey through 500,000 Years of African Culture and Identity*, Luke Pepera sets out to connect the experiences of the first Homo sapiens and early communities to those of modern Africa. What has survived? What customs and traditions live on? What, ultimately, connects us all to this history? We were delighted to catch up with Pepera to learn more.

© Rachel Sloan Photography

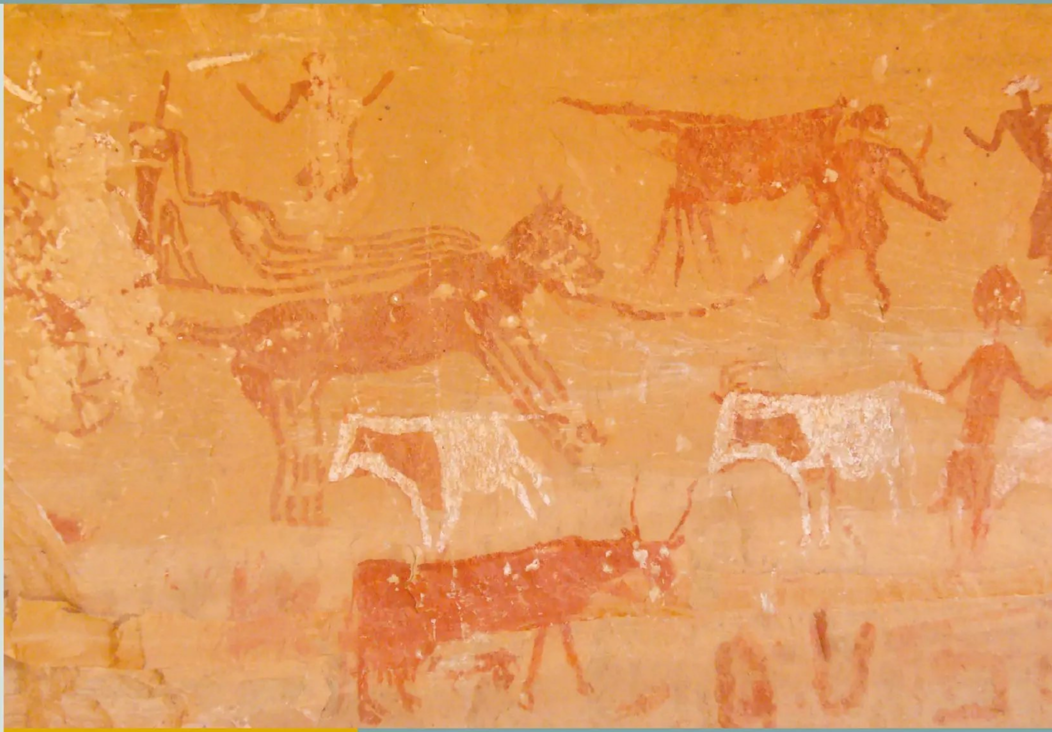
EXPERT BIO

LUKE PEPERA

Pepera is a writer, historian, anthropologist and broadcaster focusing on African history and culture. He was born in Ghana and studied archaeology and anthropology as well as ancient and medieval African history at Oxford University. He presented History Hit's documentary *Africa: Written Out of History* and has worked at Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, *The Times* and *Tatler*.

How did studying early Homo sapien life in Africa help you understand the civilisations that followed?

I think it made me appreciate more the depth of the beliefs and practices that people in later civilisations held and engaged in. I thought of these beliefs and practices as having a tradition not just in the civilisation itself, but one that extended back tens and even hundreds of thousands of years. Even though people in later civilisations lived very differently to their ancestors from long ago, they still practised many of the same things in the same way. This tells me that these practices are not only very old but must be especially significant or play a uniquely important role in the later society for the people of this society to continue engaging in them. I therefore paid closer attention to them and asked myself about the purpose they played and whether this was the same in other civilisations or not.



ABOVE A Garamantian scene, thought to depict an early caravan route across the Sahara

Are there any particular eras or people that stand out as deserving more attention than history has given them to date?

For sure. Generally, medieval Africa pre-European contact (up until around the mid-15th century) is neglected and this is a shame, particularly because African civilisations at this time were some of the world's wealthiest, most powerful and most impactful.

You have Mali in West Africa, which I explore at the beginning of *Motherland*. In the 14th century, Mali exports 50 percent of the world's gold, even as far as Western Europe, and one of the world's first universities was founded here – the University of Timbuktu. It's also at this time the biggest university in the world, with over 25,000 students who study subjects ranging from law and medicine to astronomy and poetry and take part in exchange programmes with comparable universities in Morocco and Egypt. Moreover, students from those universities are scrambling over each other to study at Timbuktu, where some of the world's greatest scholars teach. Timbuktu also has a library with over a million books, which grows rapidly as its scholars produce more and more.

> "IN THE 14TH CENTURY, MALI EXPORTS 50 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S GOLD"

Concerning African history, oral history traditions are often brought up as a hurdle to overcome. What challenges (or perhaps opportunities) did that present for you?

I don't think oral histories are a hurdle at all and should in fact be considered on the same level as written histories. I wonder if we're primed to take written histories at face value where we would scrutinise and question oral histories. I think we should question both.

We question written histories to some extent when we talk about provenance or source bias, but there is this belief that things written down have an innate empiricism that oral histories cannot have, probably because the latter can and sometimes do change. But from oral histories, even when they do change, you ▶

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can always get an idea of what the people who tell them think, believe or know about themselves. And, actually, when you compare oral histories from different time periods, you can get a sense of how the views of the people who've told these histories have changed or developed. Rather than coming from the pen of a single chronicler, oral histories tend to be constructed, shared and known more communally, giving greater insight into how a community as a whole considers itself.

Connections to the past, through ancestors or stories, seem to be a recurring theme in your book. Could you tell us a little about that tradition?

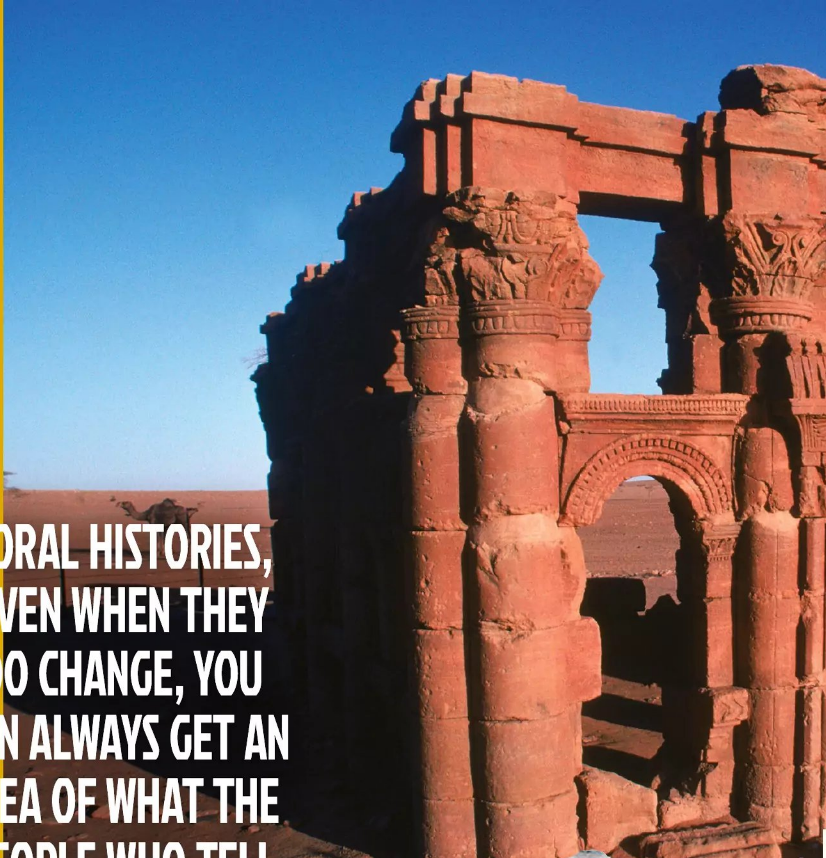
The ancestors are people who lived exemplary lives that have passed from the mortal world to the spirit world. But despite not being in the mortal world with the living, they still exert a great deal of influence over the lives of their living descendants. Not only do the living try to live their lives like their ancestors did and attempt to embody their ancestors' values, but they also communicate directly with their ancestors in various ways (through rituals, dreams, objects or shrines), asking them for help, advice or guidance. In that way, historical values and wisdom are passed on and continue to exist through the living, and aid them.

There is this constant connection between both living and dead and past and present. You are very conscious of the fact that you have access to wisdom and teachings that helped the people who came before live successful, fulfilling and accomplished lives. The practice of remaining connected to one's ancestors provides a source of knowledge and comfort, not just in knowing that you can always be in touch with those who've passed on but that you always have answers to life's many pitfalls and predicaments.

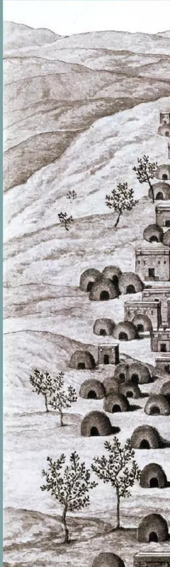
Could you tell us a little more about this fluid appreciation of past and present, old and new?

Because of our constant connection to the ancestors and the values and beliefs they represent, we're always in proximity to historical values and teachings. We apply those historical values, teachings and wisdom to our lives today. There's no thinking that just because certain values are from an older, different time period, they have no relevance or can't help us now. Many of the things we're going through, our ancestors went through and it pays to know and understand their experiences, utilise their teachings and heed their advice.

I also think that because so many African peoples, their societies and cultures are so old, we've moved away a little from understanding history as chronological events that fit into independent, successive time periods and more as a flow of values, behaviours and perspectives that have remained constant through time. A lot of African histories tend to emphasise beliefs and practices rather than individuals and events. They'll talk about the origin of a particular idea or ritual, how it was introduced, who introduced it, and how and why it was important then and continues to be important. Often, these ideas and rituals, although exceedingly old, haven't changed at all. In many ancient African societies, like first millennium BCE Nubia in what's now Sudan, people



"ORAL HISTORIES, EVEN WHEN THEY DO CHANGE, YOU CAN ALWAYS GET AN IDEA OF WHAT THE PEOPLE WHO TELL THEM THINK"



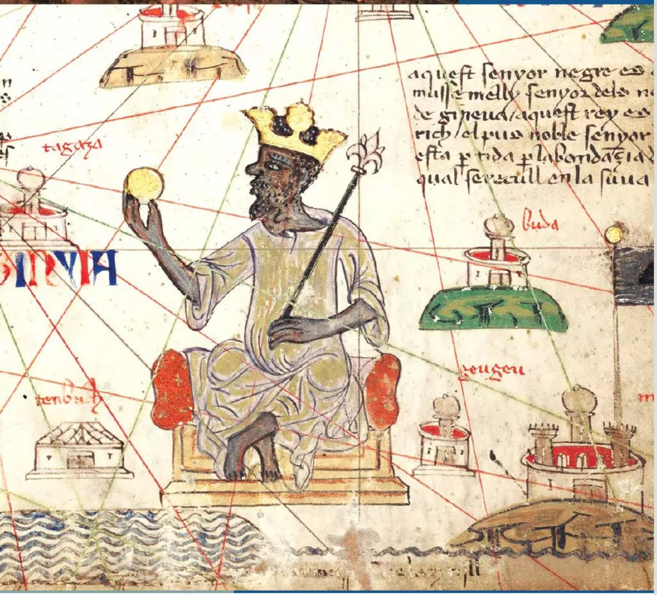
LEFT The ruins of an ancient temple in Sudan

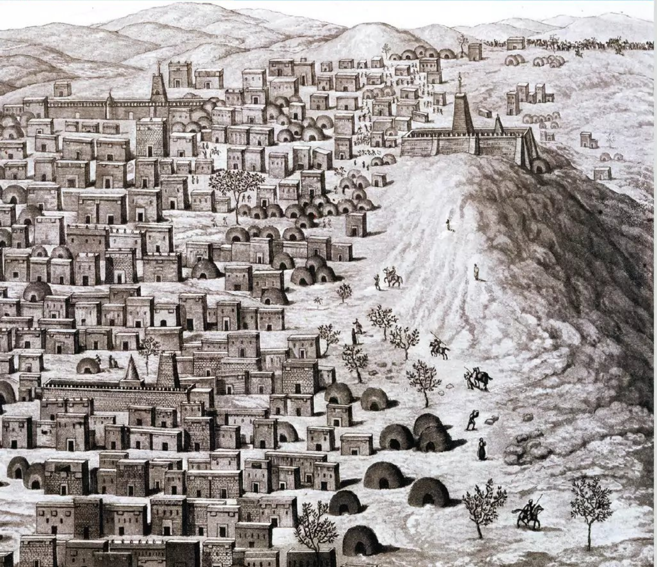
RIGHT Pepera makes a strong case for the importance of oral histories

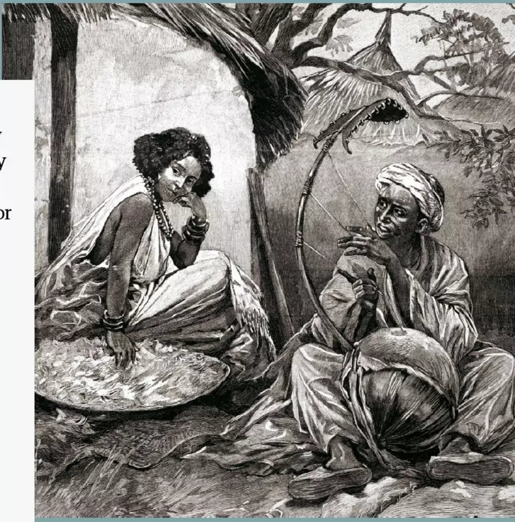
BELOW-LEFT A bronze statue of an Edo warrior from the Kingdom of Benin

BELOW The famous Mali Emperor Mansa Musa

BOTTOM An engraving of the first university, set up in the Sahara desert







poured alcohol on the ground to honour their ancestors. Today, many Africans do the same thing. Not only the practice itself, but how it's done and what it means hasn't changed for thousands of years.

Did you find any other particularly interesting connecting threads between communities, across time and geography, that you could highlight for us?

I found that across both time and space, many different African peoples participated in word games that demonstrated their mental acuity and verbal skill. These could be riddling games, where two people said riddles to one another and the person who couldn't answer a riddle lost. Or they could be insult games, where two people traded insults and the one who became speechless or angry lost. Or they could be rap battles. Such games are played in African communities both in Africa, like in Tanzania, Nigeria and South Africa, and all over the world, including in Brazil and the United States.

What's intriguing is that all of these games have the same format and purpose, so much so that you can theorise that some grew out of others. Each of them has two participants exchanging verbal blows before an audience and the audience clamours for the one they think is the most verbally dextrous. The winner is considered to be intelligent, quick-witted and skilled with words. To demonstrate these abilities is the purpose of each of these games. It's interesting that in African communities, no matter where and when they are, linguistic flair is one of the most highly prized talents. I explore this in great depth in *Motherland*'s sixth chapter, *Rappers, Singers and Storytellers.*

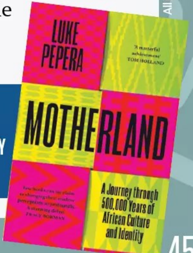
What did you learn about the role of matriarchal communities in African history when you were writing the book?

I learnt that in many matriarchal African societies there was actually a balance of power between men and women. Often, although a woman was that society's ultimate authority, there would be a king too. In this case, that woman was often the king's mother (also known as the queen mother). Both the king and the queen mother had their own legal courts, cabinets and jurisdictions. The queen mother's cabinet would be made up of only women, the king's of only men. The queen mother's responsibility was the health and safety of the women in her society, the king's the men's. Rarely did the queen mother or king make decisions by themselves. They and their cabinets conferred before an important decision was taken. This appears to be different to many societies (including many African ones) where the king was the ultimate authority, which tended to be male-dominated. Matriarchal African societies present a rather intriguing and seemingly sensible form of government.

What do you hope readers will take away from reading Motherland?

I hope people appreciate the breadth and depth of African history, culture and society. I hope they begin to understand just how old, diverse and sophisticated African peoples are. I hope they're encouraged to think of Africans as more than just victims of the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism and racism. I also hope they encounter some interesting stories and intriguing beliefs that highlight Africa's uniqueness. All in all, I hope they have an enjoyable reading and learning experience! ○

MOTHERLAND: A JOURNEY THROUGH 500,000 YEARS OF AFRICAN CULTURE AND IDENTITY BY LUKE PEPERA IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON


LUKE PEPERA
MOTHERLAND
A Journey through 500,000 Years of African Culture and Identity

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KIM PHILBY

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST TRAITOR

One of the UK's top intelligence operatives was in fact a Soviet double-agent who spent decades handing secrets to the enemy

Written by Callum McKelvie

"I wouldn't have trusted him with my cat for the weekend"

– John le Carré

On 11 May 1988, 18 months before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Britain's most notorious traitor, Harold Adrian Russell Philby – better known as 'Kim' Philby – passed away. 25 years earlier, in 1963, Philby had fled behind the Iron Curtain to Moscow. After years of suspicion and denial he had finally confessed to being a double-agent working for the Soviet Union. Over two decades (maybe more) Philby and the other members of the notorious Cambridge Five spy-ring – Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, Anthony Blunt and John Cairncross – stole confidential documents, leaked secrets and sabotaged operations. Yet of the five, it is Philby, from his lofty position at the heart of British security agency MI6, who was arguably the deadliest and whose name would be forever associated with treachery and betrayal.

Kim Philby's father St John Philby was a controversial figure in his own right

EARLY YEARS AND RECRUITMENT

Philby was born on New Year's Day in 1912 in what was then known as Ambala, Punjab, in British India. He was from prestigious upper-class stock: his father, St John Philby, a famous Arabist, was working for the Indian Civil Service at the time of his son's birth. Although not as well known today, St John was himself a controversial figure, leaning towards the extreme right as opposed to his son's later communist views. In 1939 St John stood for the British People's Party, a notorious right wing group led by ex-British Union of Fascists member John Beckett.

It was St John who nicknamed his son Kim, after the title character of Rudyard Kipling's popular 1901 novel. Ironically, Kipling's story is about a spy who lives a life of duplicity. St John sent Kim to England to be educated at Westminster School in London, where childhood friend Tim Milne later recalled that Philby was "something of a loner, who had erected barriers around himself." In 1929 Philby began his studies at Cambridge University, where the young man also embarked upon a lifelong love affair with communism. It wan an affair that ultimately led to his recruitment by the KGB – a Soviet security agency.

"KIM PHILBY'S NAME WOULD BECOME FOREVER ASSOCIATED WITH TREACHERY AND BETRAYAL"

During the Spanish Civil War Philby worked for *The Times*. He was injured by a shell and can be seen here on the right in bandages

In 2015, newly released documents from the National Archive suggested that it was Edith Tudor-Hart, a photographer and Soviet agent, who introduced Philby to Arnold Deutsch, later referred to in his confession by the codename 'Otto'. Deutsch had been instructed by his Soviet superiors to recruit the brightest students at Cambridge and Oxford universities, aware that many would soon occupy lofty positions within the British Establishment. The pair met on 1 June 1934 in Regent's Park, London, where Deutsch ordered Philby to cut all communist ties and instead pretend that he was developing right-wing views. In turn, Philby recommended Deutsch recruit two fellow students: Burgess and Maclean.

A SPY IN SPAIN

After leaving Cambridge, Philby headed for London, where he set about forging a career as a journalist, and in 1937 he was dispatched by *The Times* newspaper to cover the Spanish Civil War. The conflict had begun in 1936 following a failed right-wing military coup by the Nationalists. Now these forces, led by General Francisco Franco, were involved in a bloody war against the Republicans. Philby was dispatched to the Nationalist camp, where he likely first dabbled in espionage

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In 1955 Philby (right) held a press conference at his mother's flat to proclaim his innocence

for his Soviet handlers. However, according to documents released in 2001, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin himself may have realised Philby was ideally placed to undertake a particularly special mission – to assassinate Franco.

Philby was certainly close enough to Franco to have attempted such an attack, but was it ever seriously considered? According to historian Dr Helen Fry, although Philby's handler claimed his agent was "devoted and ready to sacrifice himself," he lacked the "physical courage and other qualities necessary for this assassination attempt."

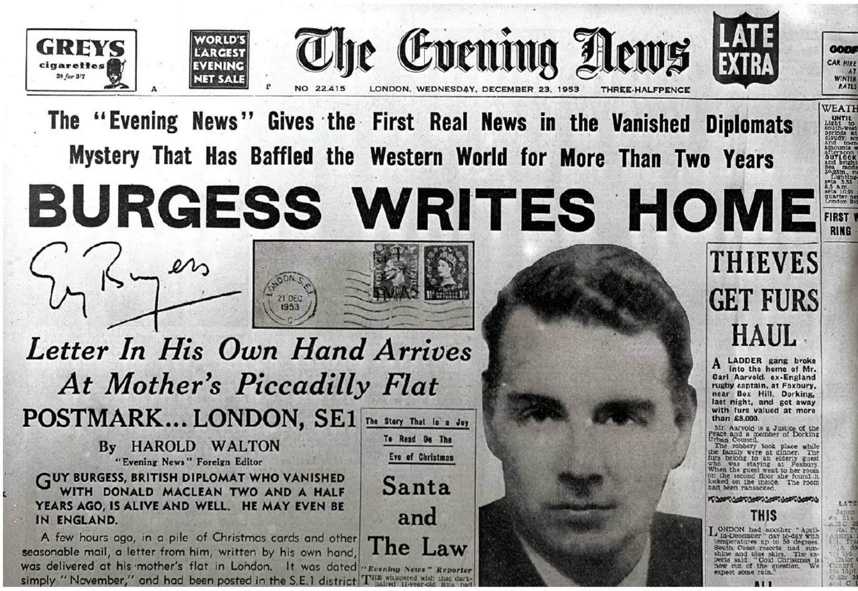
Nonetheless, Philby continued to prove his worth, providing his Soviet handlers with firsthand information. This became substantially easier after December 1937 when he survived an explosion that killed two fellow journalists. Philby later wrote: "After I'd been wounded and decorated by Franco himself [receiving the Cross of Military Merit], I became known as the English decorated by Franco and all sorts of doors opened to me."

BELOW Enver Hoxha was the Communist leader of Albania, whose regime the British and CIA attempted to topple in a disastrous mission

But nothing was ever straightforward. In 1937 Walter Krivitsky, an officer in the GRU (the primary Russian intelligence service) defected to the West. According to Tim Milne, a spy himself and Philby's aforementioned childhood friend, Krivitsky had mentioned "a young English journalist in Spain, and a young man of good family and education who had joined the Foreign Office". But the threat that Philby's cover would be blown didn't last long – in 1941 Krivistky was found dead in his Washington hotel room. He had been shot.

JOINING THE BRITISH SECRET INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

In 1939, as the Second World War erupted, Philby returned to Britain. After briefly training spies and saboteurs alongside fellow double-agent Burgess for the Special Operations Executive, he was recruited to work in Section V of the Secret Intelligence Services (SIS, but also known as MI6), a shadowy division that conducted offensive operations. Its mission was to gather information against Britain's enemies and Philby soon distinguished himself, being placed in charge of operations on the Iberian Peninsula and, later, in Italy and North Africa.



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BURGESS WRITES HOME

LONDON S.E.1 21 DEC 1953

Letter In His Own Hand Arrives At Mother's Piccadilly Flat

POSTMARK... LONDON, SE1

By HAROLD WALTON
"Evening News" Foreign Editor

GUY BURGESS, BRITISH DIPLOMAT WHO VANISHED WITH DONALD MACLEAN TWO AND A HALF YEARS AGO, IS ALIVE AND WELL. HE MAY EVEN BE IN ENGLAND.

A few hours ago, in a pile of Christmas cards and other seasonable mail, a letter from him, written by his own hand, was delivered at his mother's flat in London. It was dated simply "November," and had been posted in the S.E.1 district

The Story That Is a Joy To Read On The Eve of Christmas

Santa and The Law

"Evening News" Reporter

THE whispered wish that dark-haired 11-year-old Rita had

THIEVES GET FURS HAUL

A LADDER gang broke into the home of Mr. Carl Aarvold, ex-England rugby captain, at Foxbury, near Box Hill, Dorking, last night, and got away with furs valued at more than £8,000.

Mr. Aarvold is a Justice of the Peace and a member of Dorking Urban Council.

The robbery took place while the family were at dinner. The furs belong to an elderly guest who was staying at Foxbury. When the guest went to her room on the second floor she found it locked on the inside. The room had been ransacked.

THIS

LONDON had another "April-in-December" day to-day with temperatures up to 50 degrees. South Coast resorts had sunshine and blue skies. The experts said: "Cold Christmas is now out of the question. We expect some rain."

ABOVE Guy Burgess fled to the Soviet Union with Donald Maclean in 1951

But the entire time Philby was secretly following the orders of his Soviet masters. In 1944 they suggested to him that it would be extremely beneficial if he could somehow secure the position of chief of Section IX, the department for dealing with anti-communist operations, which at that time was headed by Felix Cowgill. Slowly but surely, Philby worked to erode support for Cowgill until he himself was made chief. "It is a very, very dirty story but, after all, our work does require getting our hands dirty from time to time. But we do it for a cause which is not dirty," Philby recounted. "But I must admit that this was the most blatant intrigue carried out against a man I rather liked and admired."

OPERATION VALUABLE

In 1947, America's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was formed, and in 1949 Philby was appointed principal advisor to the service, which was still very much a junior organisation in relation to its British counterpart. That same year the fledgling CIA, in conjunction with MI6, began an ambitious project codenamed Operation Valuable. In 1944 Enver Hoxha had established a communist regime in Albania and, as the Second World War drew to a close, Western relations with the Soviet Union had started to sour. Hoxha's regime appeared to confirm a burgeoning fear in Britain and America that communism would spread, and it was decided it would be in their mutual interest to help facilitate a 'regime change'.

Together, MI6 and the CIA trained Albanian refugees as guerilla fighters. The plan was for the guerillas to arrive in small groups until a large enough force had been mustered to begin an insurrection. But they were unaware that Philby had informed his Soviet masters, who had in turn advised Hoxha's regime. The result was a bloodbath, with over 300 slaughtered – among them CIA and MI6 agents. Philby later tried to justify his actions by claiming that, had Operation Valuable succeeded, the Soviet Union's inevitable retaliation could have led to World War Three. Did the traitor really believe that? Or was it something he told himself in the small hours when memories of his betrayals returned to haunt him?

BURGESS AND MACLEAN ESCAPE

In 1951, events that would ultimately lead to the Cambridge Five's downfall began to unfold. Philby was made aware that the code used by the Soviets to send messages to its agents had been broken. Among the decrypted messages, the CIA had uncovered a reference to a British double-agent, active in the Foreign Office, known only as 'Homer' – Donald Maclean.

As suspicion against his comrade grew, Philby knew Maclean had to flee while he still had the chance. At the same time, the increasingly alcoholic Burgess was beginning to become a liability. He had been described by America's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as "a louche, foul-mouthed gay with a penchant for seducing hitchhikers".

On Thursday 25 May 1951, British Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison met with the head of the MI5 security service and agreed that MI5 would question Maclean the following Monday. But neither suspected that, later that same evening, Burgess was driving Maclean to the port city of Southampton. They arrived shortly before midnight, just in time to catch the last ferry to St Malo, France. From there the pair travelled to Paris and finally to Russia, where they remained until their deaths: Burgess died in 1963 at the age of 52, and Maclean in 1983 aged 69. Maclean is said to have adjusted to life in the USSR well, but the ever-troublesome Burgess was unhappy and lonely, spiralling further and further into alcoholism.

> "PHILBY LATER TRIED TO JUSTIFY HIS ACTIONS BY CLAIMING THAT THE SOVIET UNION'S INEVITABLE RETALIATION COULD HAVE LED TO WORLD WAR THREE"

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CONFIDENTIAL

STEALING SECRETS

For years, Kim Philby stole classified documents from Britain's Secret Intelligence Service – in 1981 he revealed just how easy it was

Among his many acts of treachery, Philby regularly purloined classified documents and gave them to the Soviets. One would suspect such a task would be extremely dangerous and require plenty of detailed planning, but according to Philby it was relatively easy. In 1981 he gave a talk to members of the East German Stasi (Secret Police) in which he revealed some of the secrets of his life as a double-agent. "Every evening I left the office with a big briefcase full of reports that I had written myself, full of files and actual documents from the archive," he said. "I used to hand them to my Soviet contact in the evening." Philby revealed he did this "year in year out" without ever being discovered.

THE INFORMING FOUR

Author and espionage expert Andrew Lownie discusses the other four members of the notorious Cambridge Five spy ring

Kim Philby is the most infamous of the Cambridge Five, but what can you tell us about the other four: Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, Anthony Blunt and John Cairncross?
All of them were contemporaries at Cambridge, all but Donald Maclean at Trinity [College]. Philby was sent back to recruit his fellow students and brought in Burgess and Maclean, and perhaps others. Burgess recruited Blunt and Cairncross. We know that the ring was much larger and we should really be talking about the 'Cambridge 50' with many more now revealed such as Michael Straight, Leo Long and Alister Watson. The 'Oxford Ring' appears to have been a damp squib, with few achieving access to secrets. It was actually run by Arthur Wyn – a Cambridge graduate.

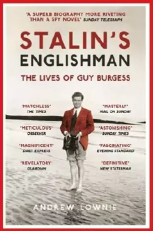
What sort of work did they undertake for the Soviet Union?
Each was involved in government work: Philby in MI6, Burgess in both MI6 and MI5 and in the Foreign Office, Maclean in the Foreign Office, Blunt in wartime MI5 and Cairncross in the Foreign Office, Treasury and at Bletchley. As a result they were able to pass across important secret information.

EXPERT BIO

© Nick Gregan

ANDREW LOWNIE

Andrew is an author and literary agent. His book, *Stalin's Englishman: The Lives of Guy Burgess*, is out now from Hachette.


'A SUPERB BIOGRAPHY MORE RIVETING THAN A SPY NOVEL' SUNDAY TELEGRAPH
STALIN'S ENGLISHMAN
THE LIVES OF GUY BURGESS
ANDREW LOWNIE

Burgess and Blunt were also agents of influence with their broadcasting experience.

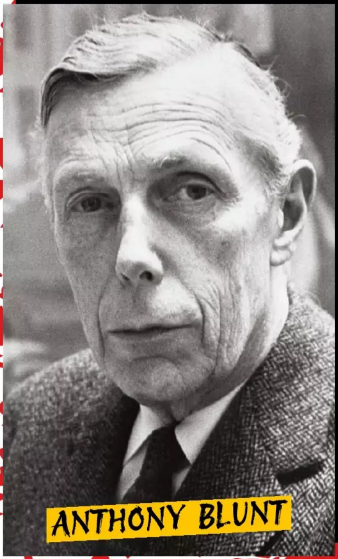
Were they aware of each other's existence?
Yes. Most had been involved in the student communist association. It was Philby who tipped off Burgess and Maclean to flee and Blunt who helped with the escape. Cairncross was a key source for Burgess.

Whereas Burgess, Maclean and Philby defected, Blunt and Cairncross were able to remain in Britain. Why was this?
Philby was allowed to escape because a trial would have been embarrassing [for the British authorities]. Blunt and Cairncross were given immunity in return for cooperation and there was insufficient evidence to secure a conviction without revealing secret sources. Diplomatic relations with the Americans were already strained after the flight of Burgess and Maclean, and further evidence of [Soviet] penetration might have led to a withdrawal of atomic cooperation. It subsequently emerged that America, not least through the Ivy League, had also been successfully targeted by Russian recruiters.

How damaging was the information provided by the Cambridge Five?
It's difficult to quantify, but basically everything that crossed their desks from 1936-51 including atom bomb secrets, codes, details of agents and operations. We don't know how many subsequent spies they also all recruited. Maclean had access to high-level plans and policy information for various Anglo-American operations, while Philby was first head of counter-espionage in MI6 and then head of station in America, where he cooperated closely with the CIA and FBI. Burgess was an influential adviser on policy towards China in the Foreign Office and even after his defection was involved in black propaganda on behalf of the Russians. We know he passed 4,604 documents to the Russians between 1941 and 1945. Blunt had a senior role in MI5 during WWII, while Cairncross would have been able to reveal Bletchley secrets such as Ultra.

The problem is we don't know who saw what, when, and how they acted on it. Joseph Stalin was so paranoid that he ignored information which did not support his own beliefs and at one point believed the Cambridge spies were plants.

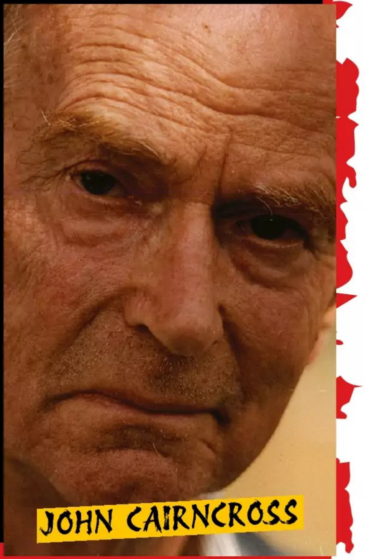
Perhaps the greatest damage was the defection itself, which undermined Anglo-US intelligence co-operation for many years and public respect for the institutions of government, including Parliament and the Foreign Office. It also bequeathed a culture of suspicion and mistrust in the security services as it hunted for moles for the next 50 years.



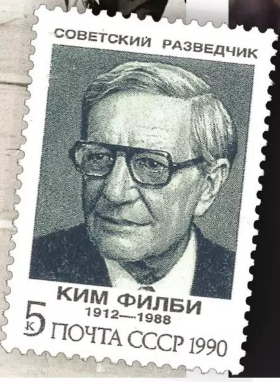
ANTHONY BLUNT

DONALD MACLEAN

GUY BURGESS



JOHN CAIRNCROSS



ABOVE-LEFT Philby defected to the Soviet Union in 1963 and lived there until his death in 1988

ABOVE Philby was treated as a hero in the USSR and was honoured with this stamp in 1991

ABOVE-RIGHT Philby pictured with Rufina Pukhova, who he met and married while living in the Soviet Union

> **“PHILBY HAD REVEALED THE LOCATION OF HIDDEN MICROPHONES WITHIN THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY”**

SUSPICIONS GROW

To the British Establishment it became disturbingly clear where the disappearing diplomats had gone. And Burgess' defection had complicated matters for Philby. Why did he flee, when according to a 1955 sitting of the House of Lords there was “no suspicion on the part of the authorities against Burgess”? Perhaps, as has been suggested, he was becoming a security risk and was ordered to defect by his Moscow handlers. However Anthony Blunt, himself one of the Cambridge Five, suspected that it was Burgess' own decision. “He knew he was finished and decided to get out, not taking into account the consequences that this action might have for his friends,” Blunt wrote in an unpublished memoir. Now suspicion began to fall on Philby and a question was floating around the corridors of power in Whitehall: was he the rumoured ‘Third Man’?

Philby soon found himself under interrogation in what the National Archives describe as “a determined attempt to get Philby to confess his guilt as a spy for the Soviet Union.” The ‘Third Man’ remained defiant but his career was now in tatters. Before Burgess and Maclean's defection it had been rumoured Philby might soon be offered the highest position of all, the head of MI6, but now such dreams lay in ruin. Philby resigned and returned to a career in journalism. Finally, on 7 November 1955, Foreign Secretary Harold MacMillan told the House of Commons that there was “no reason to conclude that Mr Philby has betrayed the interests of his country, or to identify him with the so-called ‘Third Man’, if indeed there was one.” A press conference was held at Philby's mother's house. He was free, but not for long.

Exonerated, Philby took a position as *The Observer*'s Middle East correspondent and moved to Beirut, Lebanon. For the next eight years, his life appears to have continued uninterrupted by threats of discovery. However, following the defection of Anatoliy Golitsyn from the KGB to the CIA, suspicion once again fell on Philby. Nicholas Elliott, a close friend, met Philby in January 1963 with the intention of finding the truth. This time Philby confessed and on 23 January fled to Moscow, abandoning his third wife, Eleanor Brewer, in Beirut.

FOR MORE TALES OF TREASON AND BETRAYAL READ HISTORY'S BIGGEST TRAITORS AVAILABLE NOW

MEMOIRS IN MOSCOW

The final 25 years of Philby's life were spent in Moscow, where he was given the rank of colonel in the KGB and occasionally worked as an advisor. But, according to his fourth wife Rufina Pukhova, the old spy suffered from loneliness and a drinking problem – which he was able to quell in his later years. She revealed that he once said to her: “I came here totally full of information, I wanted to give everything I had but no one was interested.”

In 1968, his memoir *My Silent War* was published to much fanfare. Celebrated author Graham Greene, best known for his 1955 novel *The Quiet American* and espionage classic *The Third Man* (1949), contributed a notoriously sympathetic introduction. “He betrayed his country – yes, perhaps he did, but who among us has not committed treason to something or someone more important than a country?” wrote Greene.

Others were more concerned with the contents of the memoirs, chief among them the British government. In 2020 previously unreleased documents revealed that the British press had been convinced to run stories of a ‘French Philby’ in an attempt to stop the Parisian magazine *Paris Match* from serialising them. Their concern proved to not be entirely unfounded. When MI5 obtained a draft copy, they were dismayed to discover Philby had revealed the location of hidden microphones within the headquarters of the British Communist Party. But were the memoirs as explosive as feared? That remains uncertain. In a 2014 interview with *The Times*, noted spy historian Ben Macintyre referred to them as “a brilliant confection of half-truth, self-serving myth, lies, KGB propaganda and genuine memoir.”

A BITTER LEGACY

The Berlin Wall fell on 9 November 1989 – eighteen months after Philby's death – and in 1991 the Soviet Union was formally dissolved. The Cold War was over – or was it? Increasingly the Russian regime of Vladimir Putin has looked back to its Soviet past and has once again honoured Philby as a national hero. In Britain, he remains infamous. Author and ex-spy John le Carre, who claimed his own diplomatic cover had been blown by Philby, used him as the inspiration for the traitor at the heart of his novel *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, published in 1974. Now, over 60 years after his defection and nearly 40 after his death, Philby remains as controversial yet unknowable as ever. Why did he betray his country? For power? Or through conviction? Whatever his motivation, his legacy of treachery lingers to this day.

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EVOLUTION of ARCHAEOLOGY

From tales of dragons to carbon dating, how we interpret artefacts is a long and strange story

Written by Mark Dolan

Archaeology is such an old discipline that archaeologists have begun to study themselves! The first 'archaeologist' that we know about is Nabonidus, a 6th century BCE king of Babylon. While observing the Mesopotamian idea that to properly rebuild a temple it needed to be excavated and rebuilt according to the original plans, he uncovered artefacts belonging to his predecessor, Naram-Sin, who ruled 3,200 years earlier. Nabonidus' efforts to date the objects (which were commendable but off by about 1,000 years) are the first known attempts to date archaeological remains.

The Roman historian Suetonius, who was writing in the 1st century CE, recorded that Emperor Augustus (r.27 BCE - 14 CE) was a collector of the weapons of ancient heroes, like those recorded by Homer almost 1,000 years earlier. Around 250 years later, St Helena of Constantinople, the mother of Roman Emperor Constantine and patron saint of archaeologists, went off searching for the 'True Cross' when she was probably well into her 70s.

By the medieval period, people in the West were rediscovering the ancient landscape and understanding it in the ways that made the most sense to them. Prehistoric monuments such as long barrows – large burial mounds – were sometimes thought to be the graves of an extinct race of giants or dragons. In *Beowulf*, the Old English epic poem that dates to c.700-1000, there is a description of Beowulf fighting a dragon who lived in an ancient barrow surrounded by treasures. This detail would have been based on the reality of the ancient grave goods that were often deposited in barrows in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.

Sometimes the effects of weathering and the burrowing of animals would cause previously buried objects to find their way to the surface, including large pots that were probably cremation urns. These became known to people as 'magic crocks', and helped to create further intrigue into the mysterious places that they came from.

At the same time, farmers ploughing their fields were uncovering stone tools and arrowheads that were believed to be either 'elfshot' or thunderbolts. Elfshot was the name given to localised pain that people and animals would feel without any apparent cause, due to the belief that invisible elves or pixies were causing the injury by shooting arrows at them. When the Neolithic arrowheads were found, it was believed that these were the projectiles used by the elves, and they were sometimes turned into pendants and worn as amulets to ward off the elves' evil. Others ascribed them an even more fantastical origin: they thought they were lightning bolts that had fallen from the sky during thunderstorms that had been picked up by the elves.

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Magical or not, these objects all caught the imagination of medieval Europe, and people started collecting them and showing them off to others, leading to the rise of cabinets of curiosities (the precursors to museums) and the advent of antiquarianism.

The rise of the antiquarians

The next phase in the development of archaeology as a discipline came in the form of antiquarianism. Towards the end of the 14th century, as Europe entered the Renaissance, the old political system of small, weak kingdoms gave way to the rise of larger monarchies with greater territory and economic power. In Italy, which spearheaded this new culture, scholars looked to the past for precedents for the new political system, and they turned to the texts of Ancient Greece and Rome, the civilisations considered the greatest of the ancient world. These were held as cultural and aesthetic ideals that Europe should rediscover, and this led to the collection, display and celebration of classical literature, statues, art and artefacts.

Statues and objects from antiquity began to be collected and displayed, initially in churches but later in the homes of the wealthy – those who were able to dedicate time and money to the fashionable new hobby. Even monarchs got in on the act, sometimes hiring antiquarians to build and sort their collections for them.

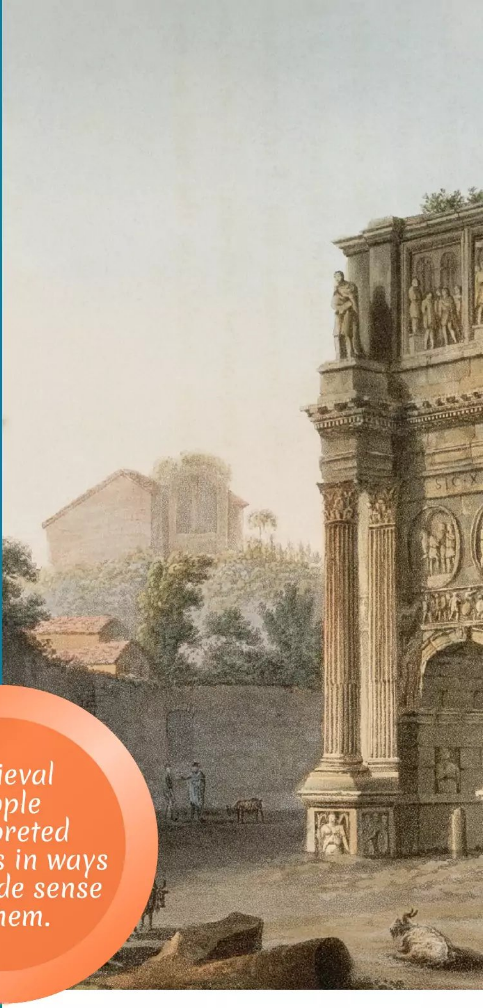
Eventually, antiquarians started looking further afield than Greece and Rome, with the interest being picked up by aristocrats in northwest Europe, including Britain and Sweden. Instead of classical buildings, these antiquarians turned their attention to local antiquities and monuments such as runic stones, stone circles and burial mounds. This marks the beginning of the transition from antiquarianism towards a more systematic archaeology, as some pioneering antiquarians began to become interested in monuments and sites rather than just artefacts. In 1662, the first university chair of archaeology was created, in Uppsala, Sweden, though it would be another 200 years until the discipline really started to leave behind the antiquarian ethos.

During the 18th century, new archaeology projects at sites such as Pompeii and Herculaneum saw the ancient wonders become popular tourist attractions. These sites were soon key stops on the Grand Tour, the fashionable European adventure for well-heeled young men and women of the social elite. They would embark on the Grand Tour to see the wonders of ancient Greece and Rome and study classics, and this experience quickly became an essential milestone on the way to a cultured and educated upper-class adulthood.

Having an interest in classical antiquity became synonymous with wealth and status, driving the antiquities trade to greater heights as wealthy enthusiasts sought to display their collections and show off their education and culture. This growing fascination with classical archaeology helped shape how it was practised as it developed into an academic discipline in the 18th and 19th centuries.

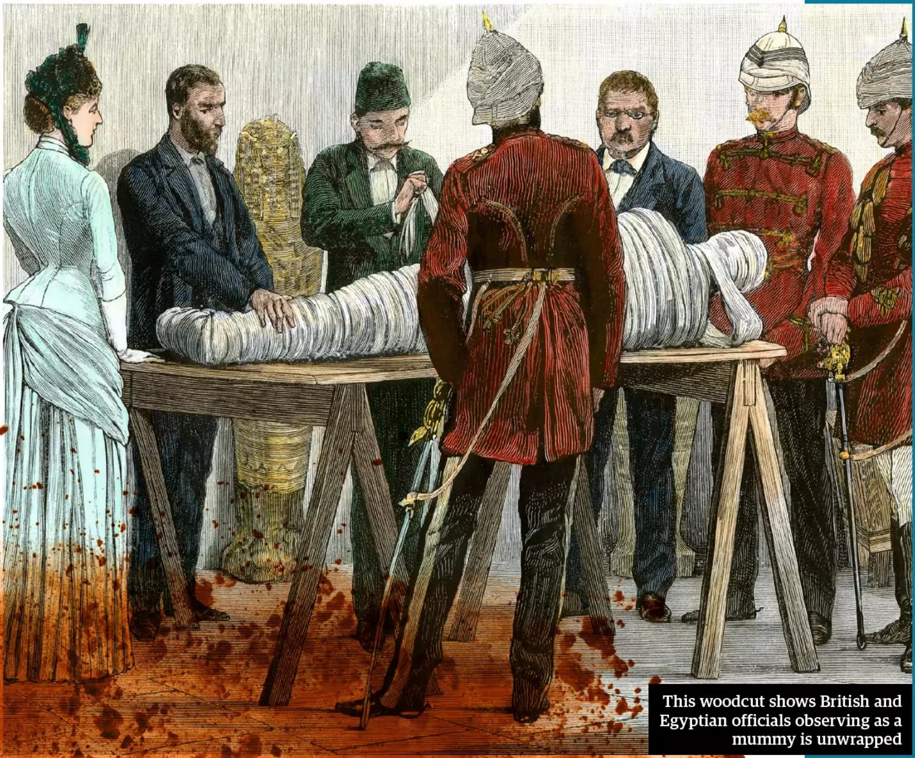
LEFT The British Museum continues to dedicate a large area to Egyptian treasures

RIGHT An engraving by Matthew Dubourg shows tourists visiting the Arch of Constantine in Rome

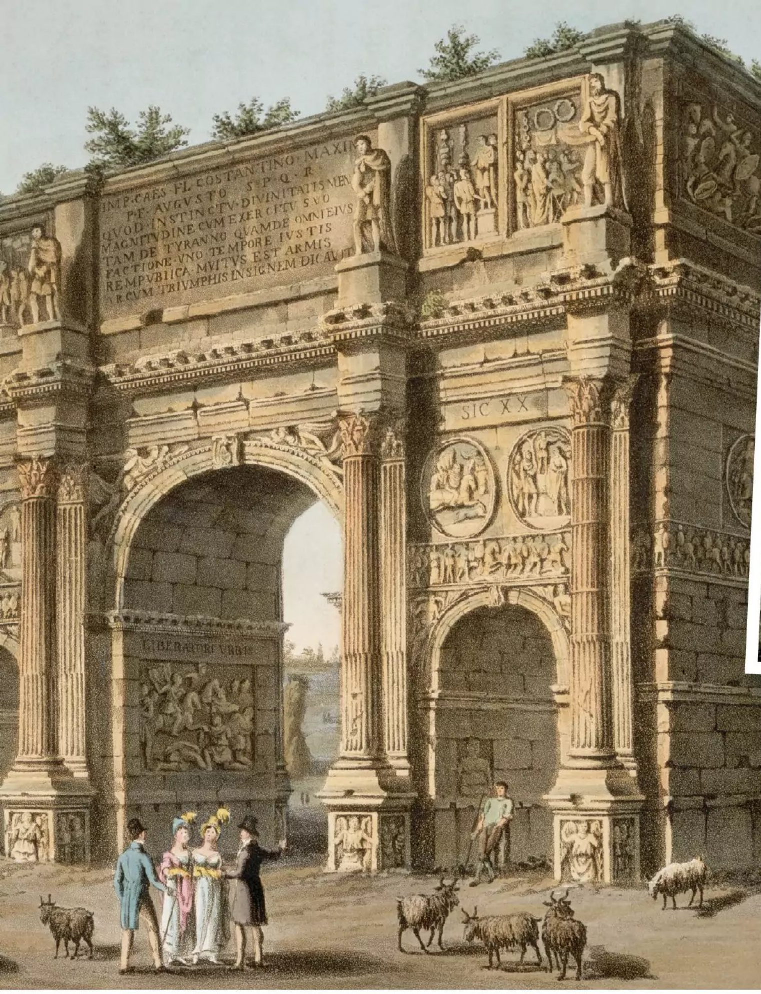


Medieval people interpreted artefacts in ways that made sense to them.

"SOME PIONEERING ANTIQUARIANS BEGAN TO GET INTERESTED IN MONUMENTS AND SITES, RATHER THAN JUST ARTEFACTS"



This woodcut shows British and Egyptian officials observing as a mummy is unwrapped



TOP Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun sparked the public's enthusiasm for Egyptology

ABOVE Agamemnon's mask survived - the city of Troy did not

Archaeology and furthering the colonial project

Late 17th- and 18th-century scholars became attached to the ideas put forward by ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, who suggested that civilisations went through a predictable and linear progression of technology, going from 'primitive' to 'civilised'. This idea formed the basis of J Thomsen's Three-Age System (Stone Age; Bronze Age; Iron Age), and underpinned the belief that Europeans, who'd developed the most technologically advanced societies, were therefore superior to 'primitive' people.

At the same time, archaeology developed as a systematic process, evolving from the 'treasure hunts' of the earlier period into genuine attempts to understand the past by carefully digging sites, recording what was found, and applying new scientific methods to the archaeological material.

It was in the second half of the 18th century that antiquarians' collections, previously housed in their own homes, began to morph into the large European museums we are familiar with today. Both the British Museum and the Musée du Louvre started as the collections of one person before opening up as public institutions in the 18th century. Louis XIV of France vacated the Louvre in favour of the Palace of Versailles at the end of the 17th century, leaving the Louvre to house the Royal Collection, which included a large collection of classical Greek and Roman art. During the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century, it was decided that the Louvre would become a public museum for the display of France's masterpieces. Its doors opened in 1793.

The British Museum was also founded in the 18th century from the initial collection of a single person. In 1753, the British Government passed an Act of Parliament that created the world's first free public national museum, and bought the collection of the Royal Society President Hans Sloane. His collection comprised over 80,000 natural history specimens, 40,000 books and manuscripts, and 32,000 coins and medals – it represents the heart of the British Museum's collection to this day, though now the museum has over eight million objects.

Initially the British Museum was only open to a select portion of the population, but by the early 19th century it was admitting "any person of decent appearance" (a deliberately subjective rule that in reality continued to discriminate against many), which increased the number of people who visited. Both the British Museum and the Louvre presented their classical collections as their centrepieces and portrayed their nations as the natural heirs to these renowned civilisations.

When nationalism meets archaeology

The 19th century saw archaeology develop into a professional discipline and nationalism emerge as a political ideology, and the two were closely intertwined. Western European nations such as Britain, France and Germany framed themselves as the natural heirs of the classical civilisations and the most developed of the modern societies; this spurred them on to visit 'less developed' areas such as Egypt, Turkey and the Americas to excavate the ancient landscape in the belief they were the most learned and suitable people to do so.

Many of these expeditions remained little more than treasure hunts, with the likes of Heinrich Schliemann and Luigi Palma di Cesnola using questionable methods and justifications. Schliemann, ▶

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who wanted to lend archaeological credence to the events told by Homer in *The Iliad*, used dynamite to blast through layers of archaeological material at the site of Hisarlik in modern-day Turkey, believed to be the ancient site of Troy. Unfortunately, while Schliemann was confident in his methods, even announcing discoveries such as the 'Death Mask of Agamemnon', it's now thought that in his haste he blew up the remains of the historic city.

Cesnola, who was the American consul to Cyprus and whose collection eventually formed the basis of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, employed hundreds of workers to dig into the island's ancient tombs and find artefacts. To bolster his reputation as an archaeologist, he even made up tombs containing spectacular collections of treasure that in reality had been found across numerous sites.

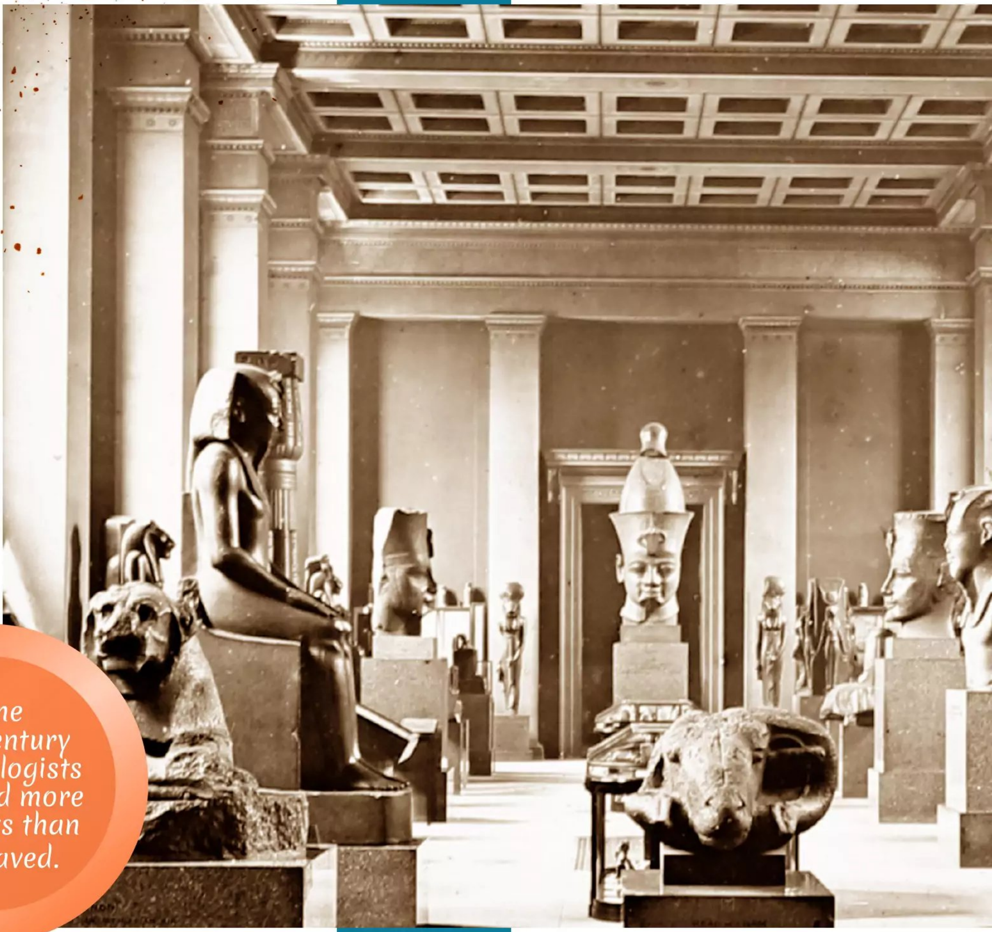
Another important figure at this time was Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers. Pitt Rivers became interested in the development of the rifle during his military career and went on to amass a great collection of archaeological and ethnographic artefacts from around the world. He organised them in a way that drew on the evolutionary ideas of Charles Darwin, aiming to display the full evolution of weapons from the humble pointed stick to the rifles of his own time. His work was some of the earliest systematic and scientifically minded archaeology, though many of his ideas hinged on the discredited theory of 'superior' and 'inferior' or 'primitive' peoples. Pitt Rivers is often credited with the innovation of stratigraphy – the analysis of the order and position of layers of archaeological remains. In fact, this approach was already being considered by archaeologists such as Christian Maclagan, Scotland's first female archaeologist, who also pioneered the meticulous recording of sculpted stones.

> Some 19th-century archaeologists damaged more artefacts than they saved.

The lure of Egypt

It was also around this time that the Western world became interested in the archaeology of ancient Egypt. 'Egyptomania' truly took hold in Britain in 1922 after Howard Carter discovered Tutankhamun's tomb, but the history of Egyptology goes back much further than this. During a visit to Egypt in 1873-4, the writer Amelia Edwards saw the destruction of ancient monuments and decided to dedicate her life to their preservation and protection. Working with curators at the British Museum, Edwards founded the Egypt Exploration Fund (now the Egypt Exploration Society) and promoted the study of ancient Egypt through talks, popular articles and funding opportunities for young researchers. One such researcher who benefitted from Edwards' efforts was Flinders Petrie, who is regarded as one of the great Egyptologists and whose name remains on University College London's Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology (though some of the museum's earliest collections were those donated by Edwards herself).

Flinders and his wife Hilda went on to excavate widely throughout Egypt, developing new systematic approaches and furthering the cause of Egyptology. Although Flinders was a significant figure in developing scientific methods in archaeology, he was also an avowed eugenicist and white supremacist who believed that the ancient



ABOVE The Egyptian Room in the British Museum, December 1890

RIGHT Amelia Edwards, one of the earliest Egyptologists

Japanese archaeologists study artefacts found near the Giza pyramids

ABOVE Augustus Pitt Rivers founded the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford in 1884, donating his collection

LEFT A replica of the Trojan Horse at the Troy archaeological site in Canakkale, Turkey

> "ARCHAEOLOGY IS NOW BECOMING A COLLABORATIVE ENDEAVOUR"

Egyptian civilisation had been built by Caucasians who'd conquered the 'inferior natives'. While there was a great prevalence of similar ideas among his contemporaries, these views were far from universal. It is important to remember the work of researchers such as Zelia Nuttall, an archaeologist who dedicated her life to studying the pre-Hispanic societies of Central America, fighting fervently against the characterisation of these people as savages and barbarians.

The history of archaeology in the 19th and early 20th centuries is often tied up with uncomfortable ideas and views, which cannot be ignored, but the methods developed have enabled the discipline to grow and change.

Then and now

Archaeology made huge strides throughout the 20th century. The 'treasure-hunting' ethos of many late 19th-century archaeologists gave way in the first half of the 20th century to the more systematic approaches of people such as Dorothy Garrod, Tessa and Mortimer Wheeler, Kathleen Kenyon, Sylvia Benton, V Gordon Childe, Maria Antonina Czaplicka and OGS Crawford. These figures all contributed to the increasingly scientific approach that archaeologists were taking to the excavation and exploration of sites, and to how new discoveries were recorded and interpreted.

New technologies such as carbon dating and flotation (a process to identify tiny artefacts and plant remains) were developed during this time, and each added more ways to gain detailed and comprehensive information that pushed archaeology towards the more scientific methods that are used today.

Archaeologists now have more ways of studying the past than ever before, using technologies that include LiDAR (a way of identifying buried remains and underground structures), isotope analysis, GPS recording of individual artefacts, photogrammetry (creating 3D images), X-Ray fluorescence and MRI scanning. These enable us to learn more about the ancient world while minimising the damage to archaeological sites, preserving the remains for future generations.

More than ever, archaeology is now becoming a collaborative endeavour, utilising highly advanced scientific techniques while also recognising the importance of indigenous and local knowledge and histories. It is an exciting time for archaeology, with new information being discovered all the time, old assumptions being overturned, and an ever-clearer picture of the ancient world becoming available to everyone.

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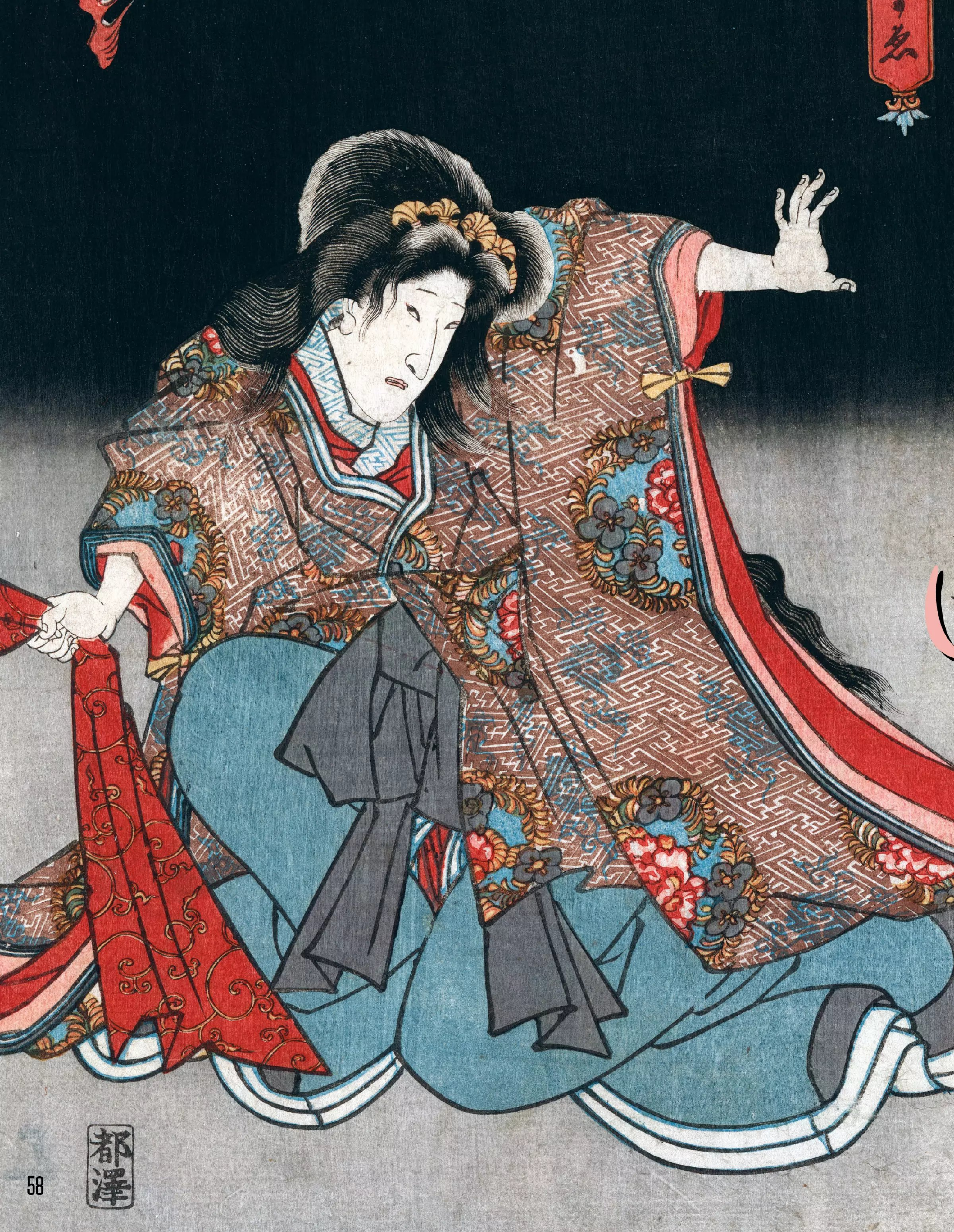
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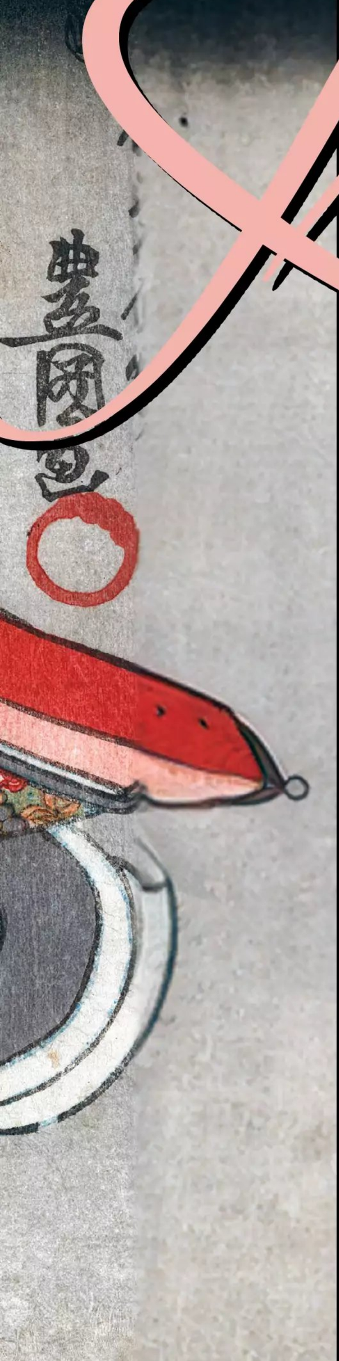
ORIGINS OF Kabuki



Explore the tumultuous history of one of Japan's most famous art forms

Written by Jonathan Gordon

Considered today to be one of the cornerstones of Japanese entertainment history, kabuki was born out of a long tradition of folk dance and performance in towns and villages. Japan experienced a cultural uplift in the late 16th century as the Sengoku (warring states) period came to an end, and as the age of the shogunate dawned at the turn of the 17th century the merchant classes flourished, bringing greater prosperity to many who'd been struggling. As a result, traditional theatrical forms such as noh (dance drama), kyogen (comic theatre) and bunraku (puppet theatre) all saw greater patronage.

As Tokugawa Ieyasu came to power in 1603 (beginning the Edo period) we also have our first recorded kabuki performance from the woman who is believed to have originated the style. Izumo no Okuni is understood to have been a shrine maiden and she combined a number of classic festival dances with scenes from other styles of theatre to entertain patrons in Kyoto. She called it kabuki-odori, with 'ka' meaning song, 'bu' meaning dance, 'ki' meaning skill and odori being a form of free dancing, often performed at festivals. As such, kabuki was a combination of dramatic and rhythmic dancing alongside narrative storytelling, ▶

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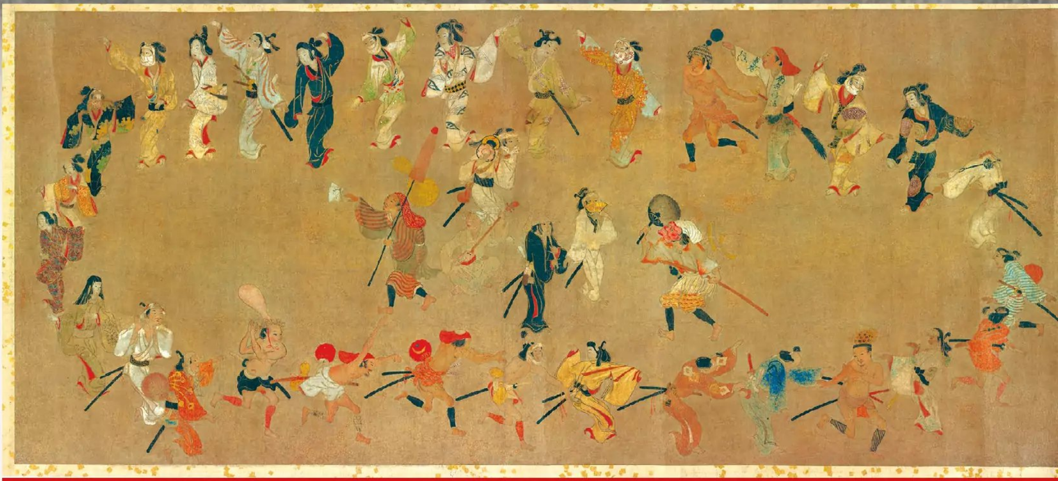

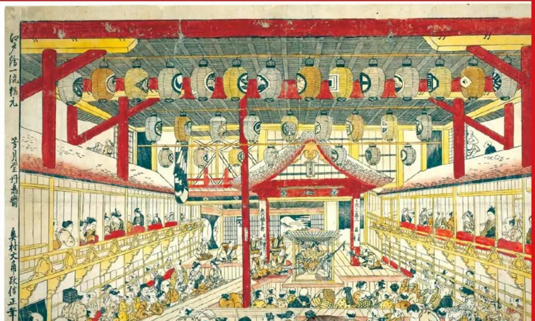

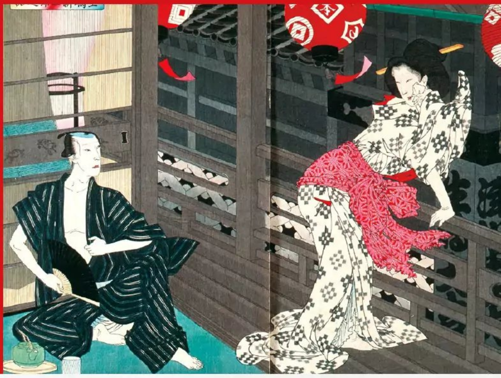

ABOVE-MIDDLE A 1745 print showing a packed crowd at a kabuki show

ABOVE A statue in Kyoto of Izumo no Okuni, the originator of kabuki

less refined than noh, but more familiar to common folk.

As Okuni built up a following in Kyoto she gathered together a troupe of fellow female dancers to join her and put on shows in other locations. Their performances were accompanied by a flute and drum, which was similar to noh theatre. One story they played out was that of a young man (all the roles were still played by women) attending a teahouse and being entertained by dancers performing an odori. Okuni also adapted a ghost story into her troupe's repertoire, with the spirit attending a teahouse to be entertained before it can return to the underworld. Okuni may well have played the role of a priest performing this dance, which was likely quite provocative, and it seems kabuki quickly gained a reputation for being shocking and unusual. Its name, while breaking down into related terms, was also taken from kabukimono, which was a term that referred to wayward street gangs of wandering samurai. It seems that Okuni welcomed this relatively risque, rebellious image.

New groups of onna-kabuki (women's kabuki) began to form, and the three-stringed guitar – the shamisen – was incorporated into the acts, becoming an essential part of the show by 1610. Troupes had also begun to spread out from Kyoto and were appearing in Edo (now Tokyo) and Osaka as well as other parts of the country. Saruwaka Kanzaburo opened Edo's first kabuki theatre in 1624; situated near the imperial palace, kabuki finally caught the attention of the bakufu, the military government of the shogun.

By this point kabuki shows had become like variety acts, lasting most of the day, and could be raucous. Japanese scholars have described this early form of kabuki as being like a banquet or festival experience. The bimonthly programme of shows even followed the calendar of social events. What's more, actors would address the audience directly and interact with them, removing the separation that existed in other staged entertainment forms. However, fighting among the audience and accusations that some of the performers were also sex workers led the bakufu to ban women from performing kabuki in 1629.

By this point, troupes of young men (wakashu-kabuki) had begun performing kabuki shows, but the accusations of prostitution and a growing fear that this new form of entertainment was a corrupting influence saw them banned in 1652. Yet this prohibition apparently did little to dampen the public's enthusiasm for these lively, humorous and colourful shows, with even upper-class members of Japanese society, such as samurai, attending events. To protect their reputations, they would watch from private boxes and wear veils over their faces.

Older male performers filled the void left by women and younger men being forced off the kabuki stage, leading to the development of yaro-kabuki, the dominant form to this day. They started to draw their stories from the more respectable noh theatre, perhaps tempering some of the more controversial aspects of previous shows. From this also emerged the role of the onnagata, or female impersonator, yet that translation doesn't quite do the role justice as it evolved into a highly revered art form. A leading figure in this development was Yoshizawa Ayame I (1673 – 1729) who was so committed to the role of onnagata that he apparently spent his day-to-day life in makeup and costume, taking what we would now call a 'method acting' approach. Such was Ayame's dedication, other onnagata would often be publicly shamed for not being in character in public if they were recognised.

The onnagata was a form of idealised femininity and was hugely influential in Japanese society as the Edo era saw massive changes to culture and customs. The costumes, makeup and even mannerisms of the onnagata could set fashion trends for women – an interesting cultural and social feedback loop appears to have been constructed.

Some level of respectability had been attained by kabuki theatre by the Genroku period (1688 – 1704), by which time merchants had become richer and urban centres like Kyoto, Osaka and Edo had grown in population. However, as a new century developed, new controversy would hit kabuki.

On the surface, the Ejima-Ikushima affair seems relatively innocuous, but it caused a scandal at the time. Ejima was a member of the Ōoku – the shogun's

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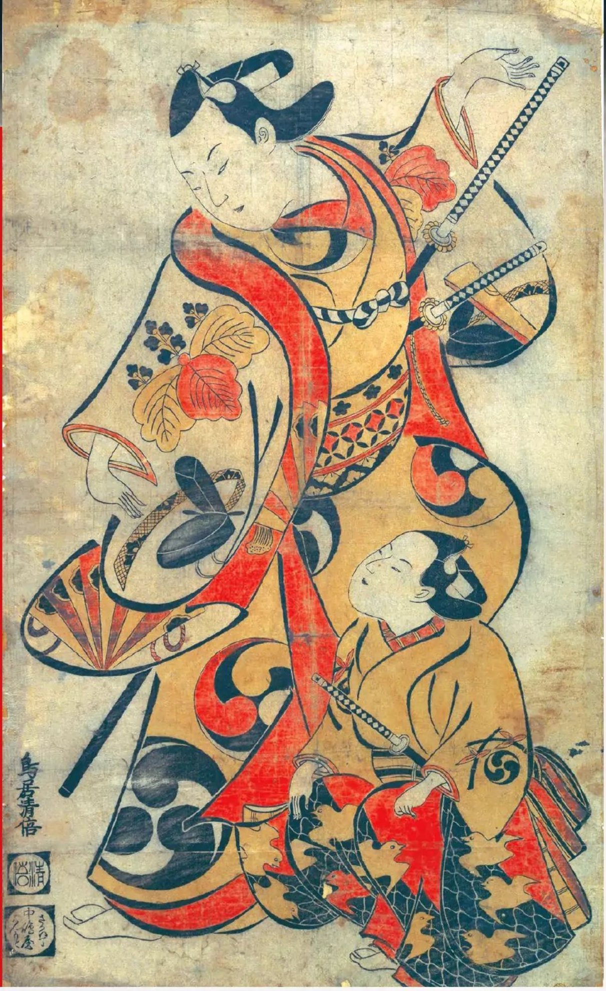

TOP-LEFT A classic odori folk dance, which was incorporated into early kabuki

MIDDLE-LEFT This print depicts Lady Ejima and actor Ikushima Shingoro

LEFT Actor Yoshizawa Ayame, who developed the onnagata role, performing as a samurai

> "KABUKI SHOWS HAD BECOME LIKE VARIETY ACTS, LASTING MOST OF THE DAY, AND COULD BE RAUCOUS"

harem – and in February 1714 she left the imperial castle to visit two temples and then attend a kabuki show in a theatre named Yamamuraza. After the entertainment she asked actor Ikushima Shingoro and others to join her at a tea house. However, Ejima had a strict curfew and, enjoying her evening, she was late returning to the castle. This infraction kickstarted a power struggle in the palace of shogun Tokugawa Ietsugu: Ejima was arrested and barely escaped execution, Ikushima was exiled, and the theatre was destroyed. Some 1,000 people are believed to have been caught up in the aftermath of this affair. As a result, kabuki theatres were forced from central Edo into outer regions, and late-evening performances were abandoned to retain some level of respectability.

Kabuki seems to have been viewed as a barely tolerable social ill. Actors were considered among the lowest social classes; they were restricted in where they could live and were treated as little more than beggars or sex workers. The authorities were determined to keep kabuki theatres as far away from government quarters and respectable districts as possible, yet the popularity of kabuki was undeniable.

Despite these blows to its reputation, kabuki managed to avoid the further wrath of officials and pushed forward with more developments. One important addition, bringing greater spectacle to kabuki, was the use of clever mechanical techniques. Namiki Shozo (1730-73) was one of the important figures in this movement, introducing cable systems that allowed actors to fly through the air, hinged roofs to bring set design on and off stage, and trap doors for quick scene changes and exciting entrances or exits for actors.

Two of the lasting acting styles of kabuki also began to take shape. Aragoto, meaning 'rough business', emerged, making use of the highly stylised dance of odori and the puppet movements that had been imitated from bunraku shows. They would wear bold makeup (called kumadori) and big costumes to make themselves as imposing as possible. Actors performing aragoto roles would exaggerate their movements and would typically play outlaws or playboys. Ichikawa Danjuro

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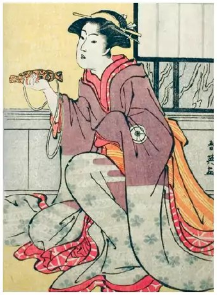
Famous Plays

Five standout kabuki stories



SUGAWARA DENJU TENARAI KAGAMI

(Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy)

Premier: 1746

A historical play about the statesman Sugawara no Michizane, who was betrayed by Fujiwara no Shihei and exiled from court. In one particularly dramatic scene, a character performs seppuku – ritual suicide.

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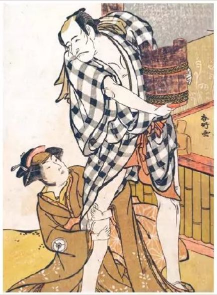
YOSHITSUNE SENBON ZAKURA

(Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees)

Premier: 1747

Another historical tale, this time involving the remnants of the Heike clan, which was almost wiped out. Main character Minamoto no Yoshitsune splits from his brother and is pursued by Taira no Tomomori, who's seeking revenge.



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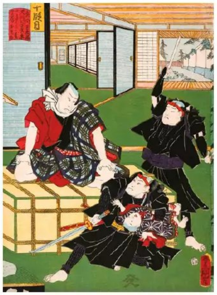

KANADEHON CHUSHINGURA

(The Treasury of Loyal Retainers)

Premier: 1748

Probably the most famous historical drama of Japanese theatre, it is better known in the West as the story of the 47 ronin and has been adapted in a number of mediums. It tells the story of betrayed samurai seeking revenge.

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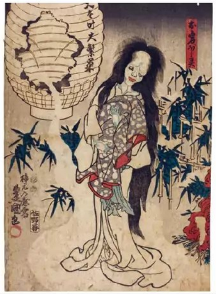
TOKAIDO YOTSUYA KAIDAN

(Ghost Story of Yotsuya)

Premier: 1825

Primarily a ghost story, this is also a tale driven by betrayal and revenge. Oiwa is poisoned and returns from the dead to torment her evil husband, while her surviving sister also seeks retribution for her murdered sibling.



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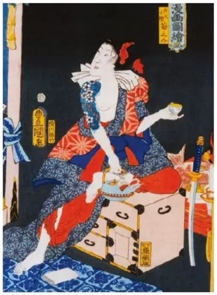
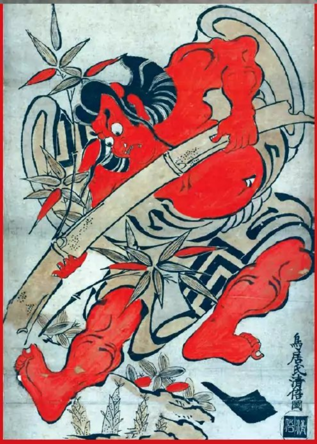


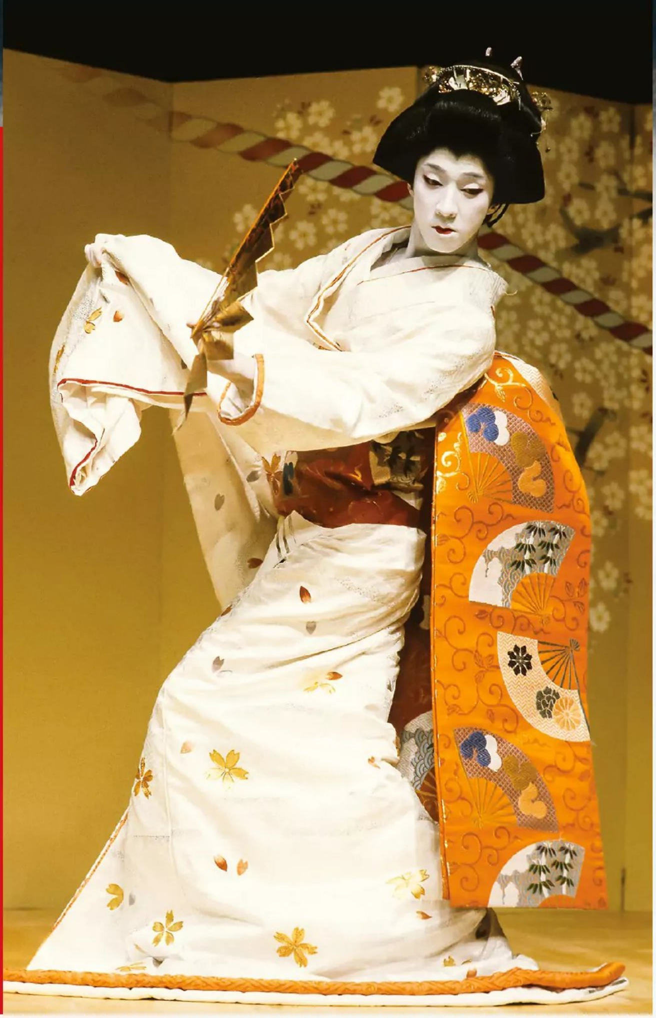
AOTOZOSHI HANA NO NISHIKIE

(The Five Thieves)

Premier: 1862

Sometimes also known as *Benton Kozo*, one of the titular thieves, two scenes stand out and are regularly performed today. One sees Benton Kozo disguised as a samurai's daughter and the other depicts a meeting of the thieves.





(1660 – 1704) was one of the actors who helped to define these roles, and that name has become one handed down through the family. There are many Ichikawa Danjuros through kabuki and acting history in Japan, as there are many other important acting lineages.

The counterpart to aragoto was wagoto, meaning 'soft business'. These slender, simply dressed performers in pale makeup played wistful, romantic characters such as once-influential men now struggling financially or jilted lovers. Sakata Tojuro I (1647 – 1709) was an actor known for these kinds of romantic leads. Many kabuki stories looked to pair these two types of character for dramatic contrast. As actors became more famous and popular among the public, and their lineage took shape, they were increasingly seen in the company of high officials, even visiting their homes.

"HISTORICAL TALES GREW IN POPULARITY, SUCH AS THE FAMOUS STORY OF THE 47 RONIN"

As the acting and staging of kabuki grew in sophistication, so did the repertoire of stories that were performed. Historical tales grew in popularity, such as the famous story of the 47 ronin who avenged their murdered master in 1703, which became the famous kabuki play *Kanadehon Chushingura* (1748). These plays were called jidai-mono, while stories that reflected the daily lives of common folk were called sewa-mono. Theatres would often perform these two types of play one after the other in that order, with an interlude of dancing involving ghosts, courtesans or exotic creatures. A full card of performances would end with the ogiri shosagoto, or dance finale, involving the whole cast.

Kabuki plays also tended to follow a moral thread that saw the wicked punished and the virtuous rewarded, and the morality of these tales draws heavily from Buddhism and Confucianism. Additionally, tragic stories tended to come from desire and love conflicting with duty, with duty typically winning out.

The early 19th century was another period of change for Japan as the Edo period came to an end. There was a relaxing of the rules for daily life and art flourished once more. Kabuki began to develop further as audiences looked for more entertainment. Fabric printing techniques had also improved and costumes became more flamboyant and colourful in keeping with the stories being told. As well as printing on fabric, kabuki had long had a relationship with woodblock printing, known as ukiyo-e. Prints were commissioned to be used as advertisements for the plays, which is why so many popular prints from Japan actually depict scenes from kabuki stories. The Osaka School, established in the 1830s, worked exclusively on prints of kabuki actors, helping to make them even more famous.

This era of increased freedoms was cut short by the Tempo Reforms, with kabuki being suppressed by 1842. The theatres in Edo were all relocated from the city to what was then still its outskirts, Asakusa. What's more, a leading figure in the theatre, Ichikawa Ebizo V, was prosecuted for his luxurious lifestyle and driven out of the city. Kabuki declined a little, but the strict reforms were deeply unpopular and didn't last. It wasn't long before theatre-goers were again making the trip to Asakusa to watch plays.

Still, the efforts to make kabuki more respectable continued and the more formal style of kabuki that exists today emerged from these changes. The late 19th century saw the Engeki Kairyo Undo (Theatrical Performance Reform Movement) trying to make kabuki more suitable and appealing to the Japanese elite classes. This culminated in 1887 when Mutsuhito, the Meiji emperor, attended a kabuki performance.

The following year, in 1888, the law prohibiting women from performing on stage was relaxed, but women did not return to kabuki as it maintained its commitment to the role of onnagata. Kabuki has evolved alongside this role, and playing with the concept of gender is often part of the subtext of the story. Women have gradually become involved in some performances, but the gender gap in Japanese theatre is still an openly discussed issue. Actress Terajima Shinobu, herself the daughter of a kabuki star, made headlines as recently as 2023 when she took to the stage at Kabukiza in Tokyo, a theatre opened in 1889.

Kabuki remains an evolving and reflective art form, developing new plays based on Manga and Anime as well as continuing to bring classic Edo stories to audiences. The form is not as popular as it once was, but despite its troubled origins it remains synonymous with Japanese culture.

ABOVE Bando Tamasaburo V displays the classic onnagata role in a New York performance, 1984

ABOVE-LEFT A print showing Ichikawa Danjuro I playing strongman Takenuki Goro. Below is a photo of his most recent successor, Ichikawa Danjuro XIII, in 2024

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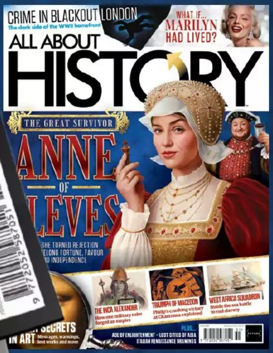

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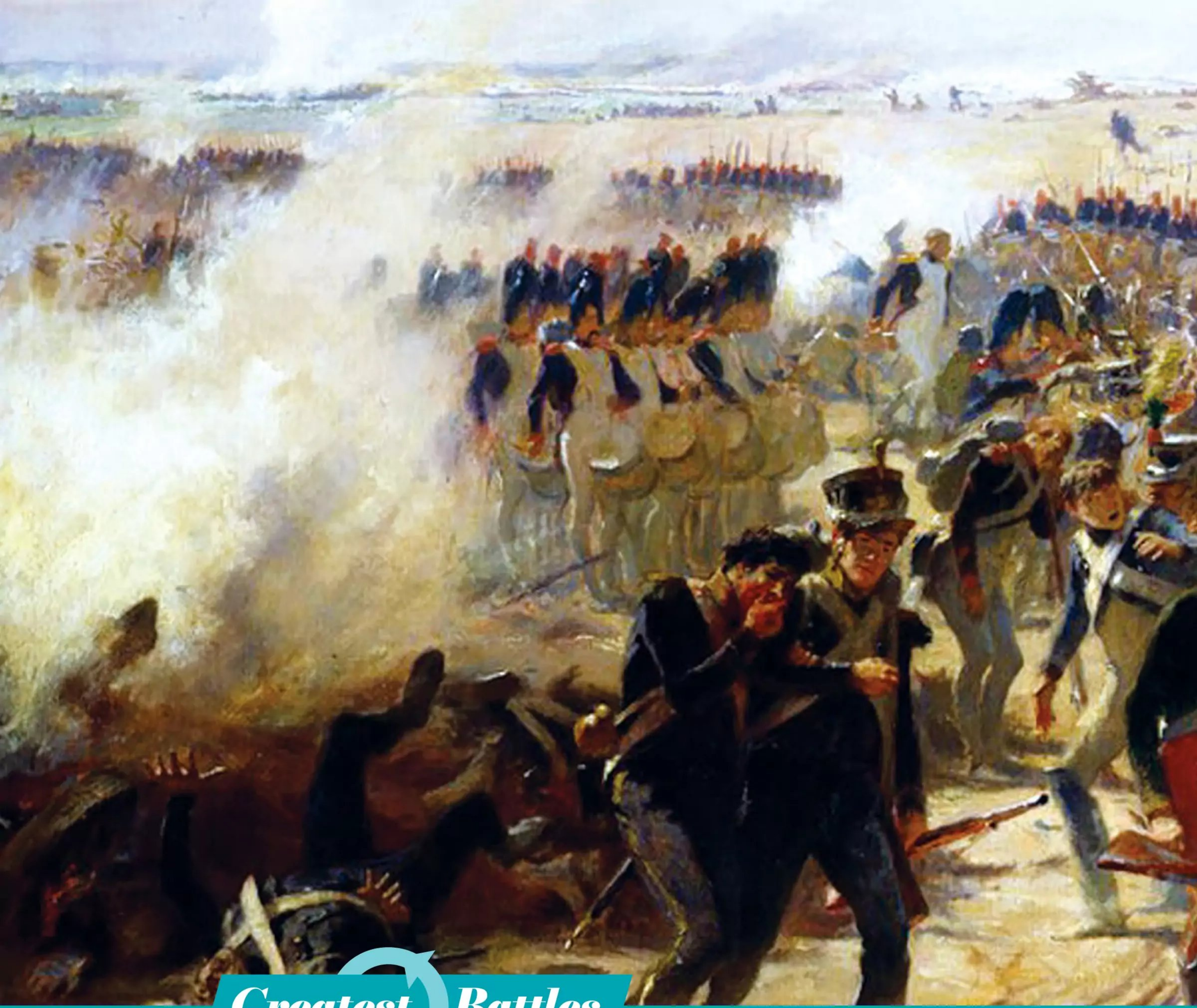


Greatest Battles

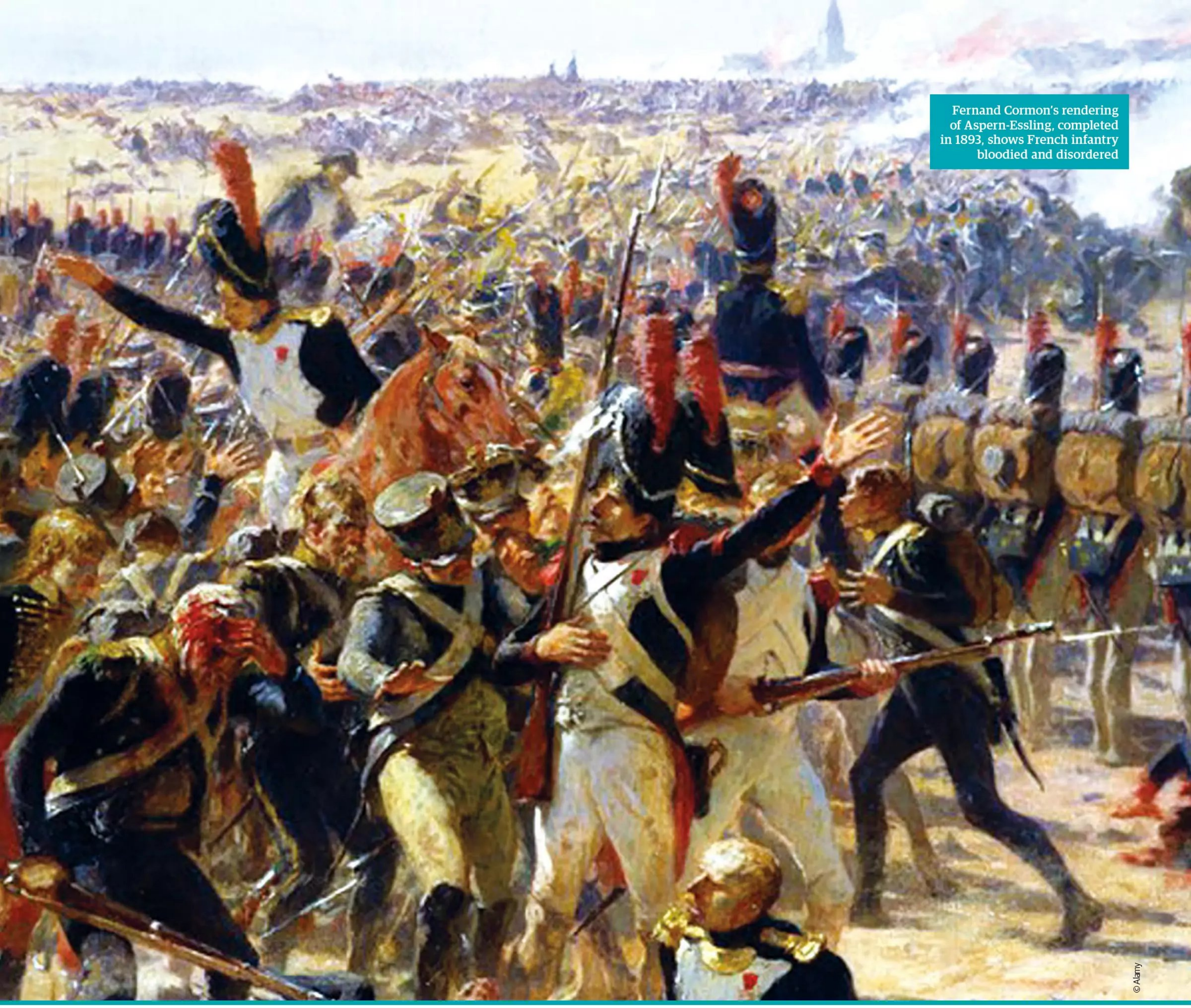
BATTLE OF ASPERN-ESSLING

LOBAU, VIENNA, AUSTRIA
21-22 MAY 1809

Written by Louis Hardiman

For three long years, Austria's best field commander, Archduke Charles, sat on the sidelines, humiliated by his defeat at the Battle of Caldiero (30 October 1805) and furious that he had been overlooked to lead his nation's army. Hundreds of miles away in northern Italy, he was powerless to stop the disaster at Austerlitz and could only watch as lands in Italy and Bavaria, alongside reparations payments of 40 million francs, were handed to the French in the Peace of Pressburg. The chance for revenge finally came during the Peninsula War in 1808.

France's invasion of Iberia failed to secure a quick victory and after his defeat at the Battle of Bailén (19 July 1808), Napoleon decided to deploy his Grande Armée. In a drawn-out attritional war against Spanish guerrillas, Napoleon's best troops and commanders became tied down in Iberia. Meanwhile, only the Army of Germany protected



Fernand Cormon's rendering of Aspern-Essling, completed in 1893, shows French infantry bloodied and disordered

© Alamy

French interests in Central Europe. These men were under the command of the capable administrator but poor field commander Louis-Alexandre Berthier and had a high number of conscripts and poor equipment.

Recalled to duty, Archduke Charles meticulously prepared the Austrian Army for war, emulating French systems to create a fearsome fighting force. Napoleon raced back to Paris, stopping only to gather young conscripts and troops from his ally Confederation of the Rhine to relieve Berthier. He was too slow to stop the main attack into Bavaria and only torrential rain prevented the Austrians from engaging the inadequate French forces in open battle.

When Napoleon finally arrived on 17 April, he dug Berthier out of trouble during the extraordinary Four-Day Campaign. First, Napoleon saw that Marshal Louis-Nicolas Davout's III Corps was dangerously isolated at Regensburg, with 80,000 Austrians quickly converging on it. Three columns attacked Davout's force on the Teugen-Hausen ridgeline, with the first missing entirely, the second being held off by Davout's cavalry and the third locked in head-on battle against Davout's infantry.

Fighting a running battle along wooded hills, Davout's men could only escape once Napoleon's reinforcements arrived. Next, a manoeuvre to the east by Lannes and Marshal François-Joseph Lefebvre pushed what Napoleon wrongfully believed was the whole Austrian Army back to Landshut. Horrified that Archduke Charles wasn't at Landshut, Napoleon realised Davout was once again isolated in the north, with Austrian troops bearing down on him. Napoleon swung north with most of the Army of Germany to meet the Austrian IV Corps at the Battle of Eckmühl, winning their fourth victory in as many days.

The struggling Austrian forces retreated north, crossing the Danube at Regensburg. They left behind a small garrison to keep the marauding Army of Germany on the south bank. Tales of these hopelessly outnumbered men, heroically throwing back endless waves of French attacks in frenzied street fighting for several hours, became legendary throughout the Austrian Army.

Only once the defending force had dwindled to 300 did the garrison finally surrender, by which time the main Austrian force was far out of Napoleon's reach. The French turned east towards Vienna and the race was on to reach the Austrian capital. They stopped only to detach the Bavarian Corps under the command of Lefebvre to put down a growing uprising in Tyrol.

Napoleon's men were a week quicker and Vienna fell on 13 May. Meanwhile, the Austrians waited patiently on the Danube's north bank, amassing over 100,000 troops on the Marchfeld, a sedimentary basin between the Eastern Alps and Western Carpathians. There, Rudolf I of Habsburg had gained victory in 1278, forging the power of the German Habsburgs with fire and sword. For Archduke Charles, the Marchfeld could again be the site of a critical victory.

CROSSING THE DANUBE

Napoleon set his men on a collision course with the Austrians on the Marchfeld by planning a crossing of the Danube at Lobau Island, 9km southeast of Vienna. The island was desolate, with no shelter except a small hunting lodge and little food or firewood to be foraged. French engineers began building a series of floating bridges on 20 May from the south bank to Lobau.

With backbreaking strain, they hauled pontoons into place, each 11m long and weighing over 1,800kg. Paradoxically, good weather made their task harder as snow melt from the Danube's 400 tributaries caused the river to become a fast-rising torrent. The Austrians took advantage, pushing barges, logs, hulks and even an entire watermill covered in burning tar into the river, smashing the pontoons out of place, often for hours at a time. Marshal André Masséna IV Corps were the first to make a similarly treacherous crossing onto the Marchfeld by noon the following day and occupied Aspern and Essling. These settlements would become crucial bridgeheads to protect the crossing and the French centre, naturally defensible as they were surrounded by earth embankments with stone and brick-built houses.

As his men continued their crossing, Napoleon's scouts made a rare error when they roamed northwards and failed to detect five mighty Austrian columns advancing, hidden by a dust storm. Napoleon was unaware of his perilous situation and in a horseback conference with his commanders said they would only have to take on the Austrian rearguard. In fact, a massive attack was just hours away. By 1pm, the Austrians forced General Gabriel-Jean-Joseph Molitor out of his outposts north of the main French force and Napoleon could no longer deny that his position was fraught with danger. He would have to hold his ground against a superior Austrian Army without the thousands of men trapped on the Danube's south bank, including Davout's III Corps.

BAYONETS FIXED ON THE STREETS

Fighting began in earnest at 2:45pm with a concerted Austrian attack on Aspern by General Johann von Hiller's First Column. In hand-to-hand combat, Molitor's men pushed back waves of Austrians, with the pressure growing further from 5pm as General Heinrich von Bellegarde's Third Column arrived, now applying pressure on Aspern from three sides. Cavalry units under General Jacob-François Marulaz, General Jean-Louis-Brigitte d'Espagne and General Raymond-Gaspard de Saint-Sulpice charged the Austrian Third Column to draw attention away from

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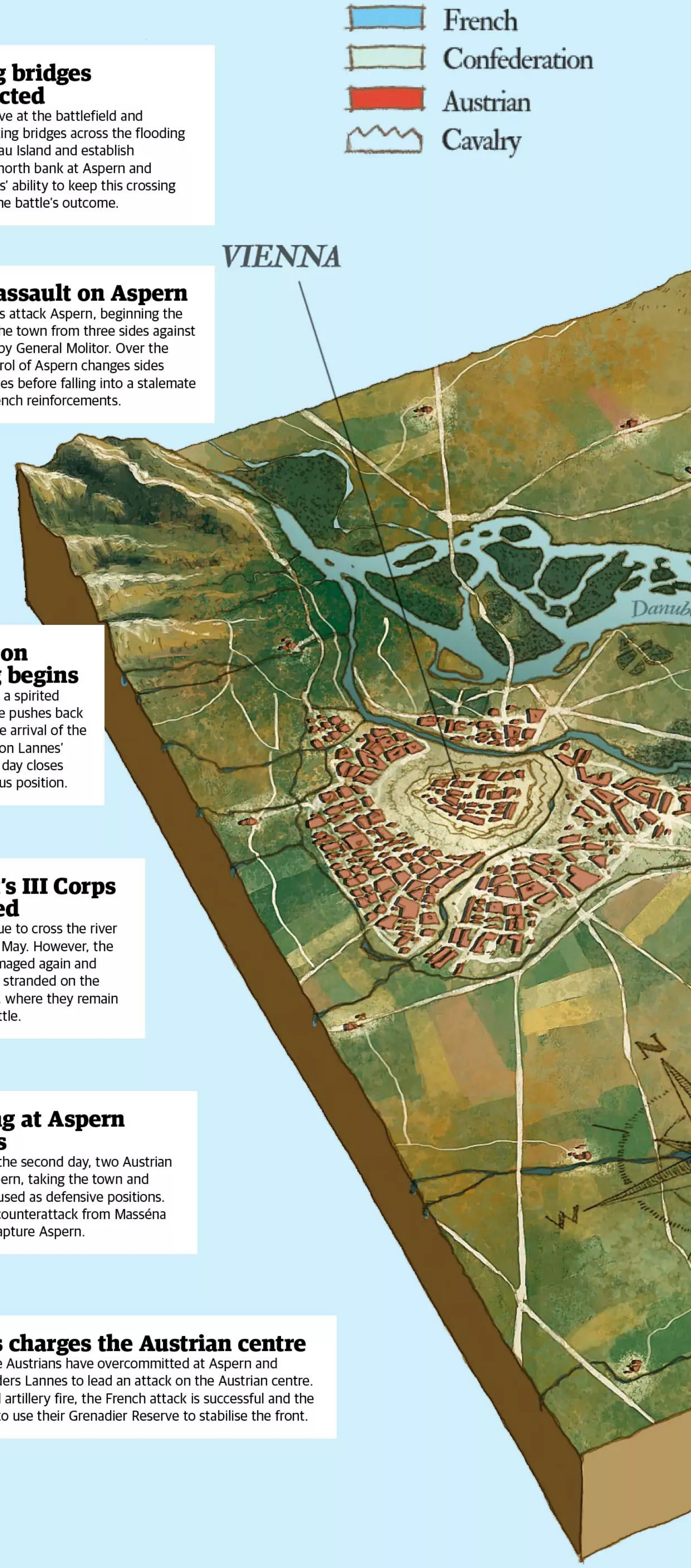


01 Floating bridges constructed

French engineers arrive at the battlefield and construct fragile floating bridges across the flooding Danube to reach Lobau Island and establish a bridgehead on the north bank at Aspern and Essling. The engineers' ability to keep this crossing operational defines the battle's outcome.

02 Initial assault on Aspern

The Austrians attack Aspern, beginning the battle. They assault the town from three sides against a heroic defence led by General Molitor. Over the next four hours, control of Aspern changes sides approximately six times before falling into a stalemate with the arrival of French reinforcements.

03 Attack on Essling begins

Marshal Lannes leads a spirited defence of Essling. He pushes back three assaults, but the arrival of the Austrian 5th Column on Lannes' east flank as the first day closes leaves him in a perilous position.

04 Davout's III Corps stranded

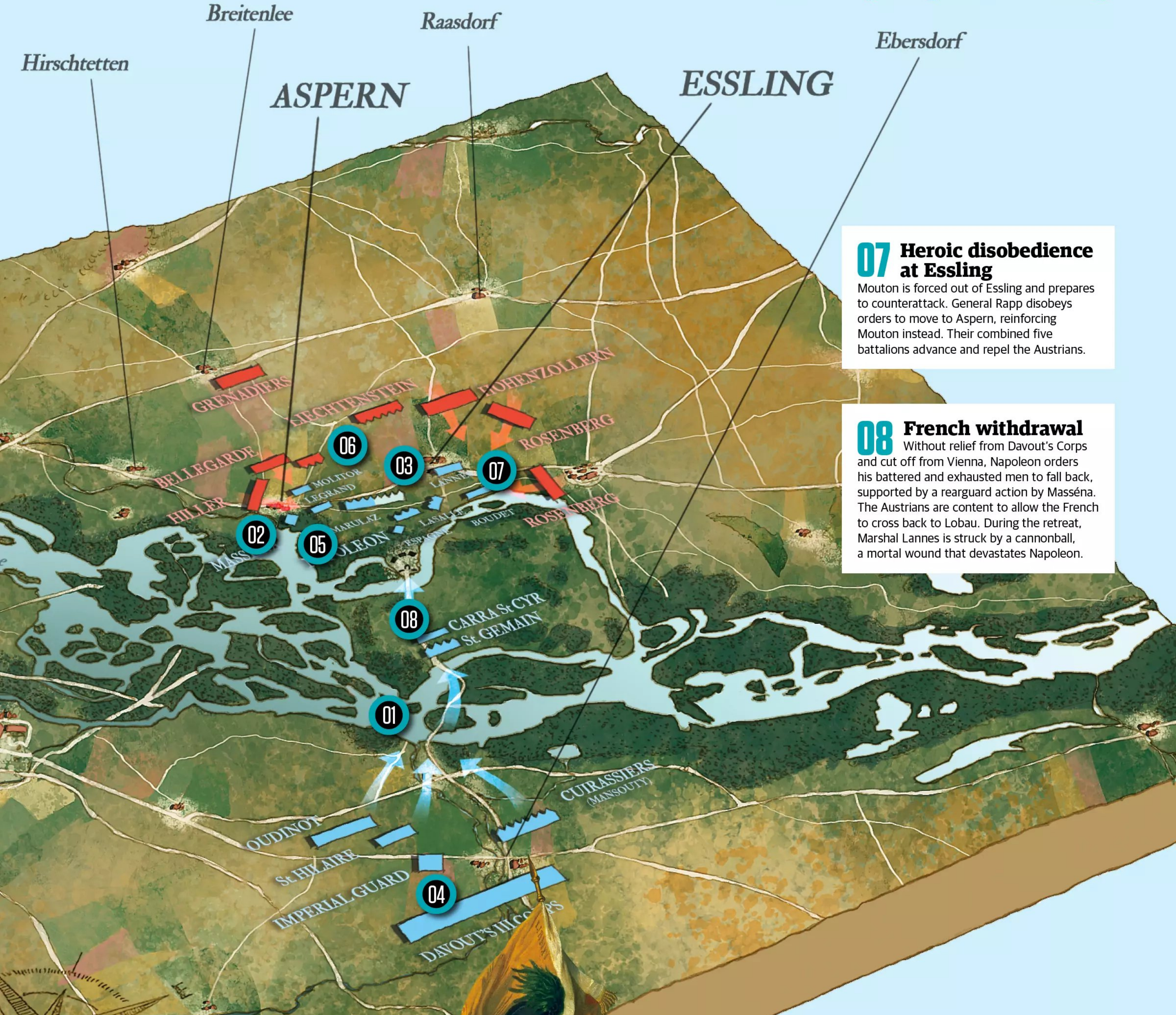
French troops continue to cross the river on the night of 21/22 May. However, the bridge is severely damaged again and Davout's III Corps are stranded on the Danube's south bank, where they remain for the rest of the battle.

05 Fighting at Aspern restarts

In the early hours of the second day, two Austrian columns strike at Aspern, taking the town and destroying buildings used as defensive positions. It takes a concerted counterattack from Masséna for the French to recapture Aspern.

06 Lannes charges the Austrian centre

Believing the Austrians have overcommitted at Aspern and Essling, Napoleon orders Lannes to lead an attack on the Austrian centre. Despite concentrated artillery fire, the French attack is successful and the Austrians are forced to use their Grenadier Reserve to stabilise the front.


Hirschtetten
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Raasdorf
Ebersdorf
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ROSENBERG
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HILLER
MOLITOR
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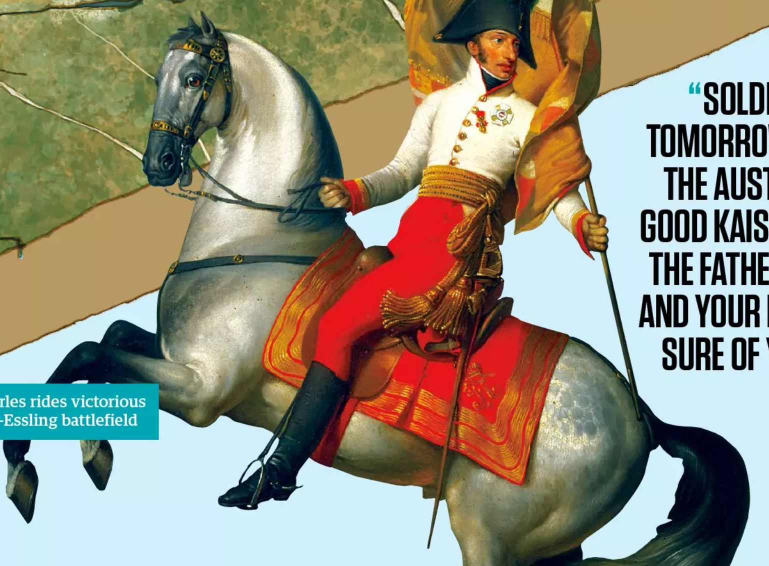
CARRA St CYR
St GEMAIN
01
CUIRASSIERS
(MANSOUTY)
OUDINOT
St HILAIRE
IMPERIAL GUARD
04
DAVOUT'S III C PS

07 Heroic disobedience at Essling

Mouton is forced out of Essling and prepares to counterattack. General Rapp disobeys orders to move to Aspern, reinforcing Mouton instead. Their combined five battalions advance and repel the Austrians.

08 French withdrawal

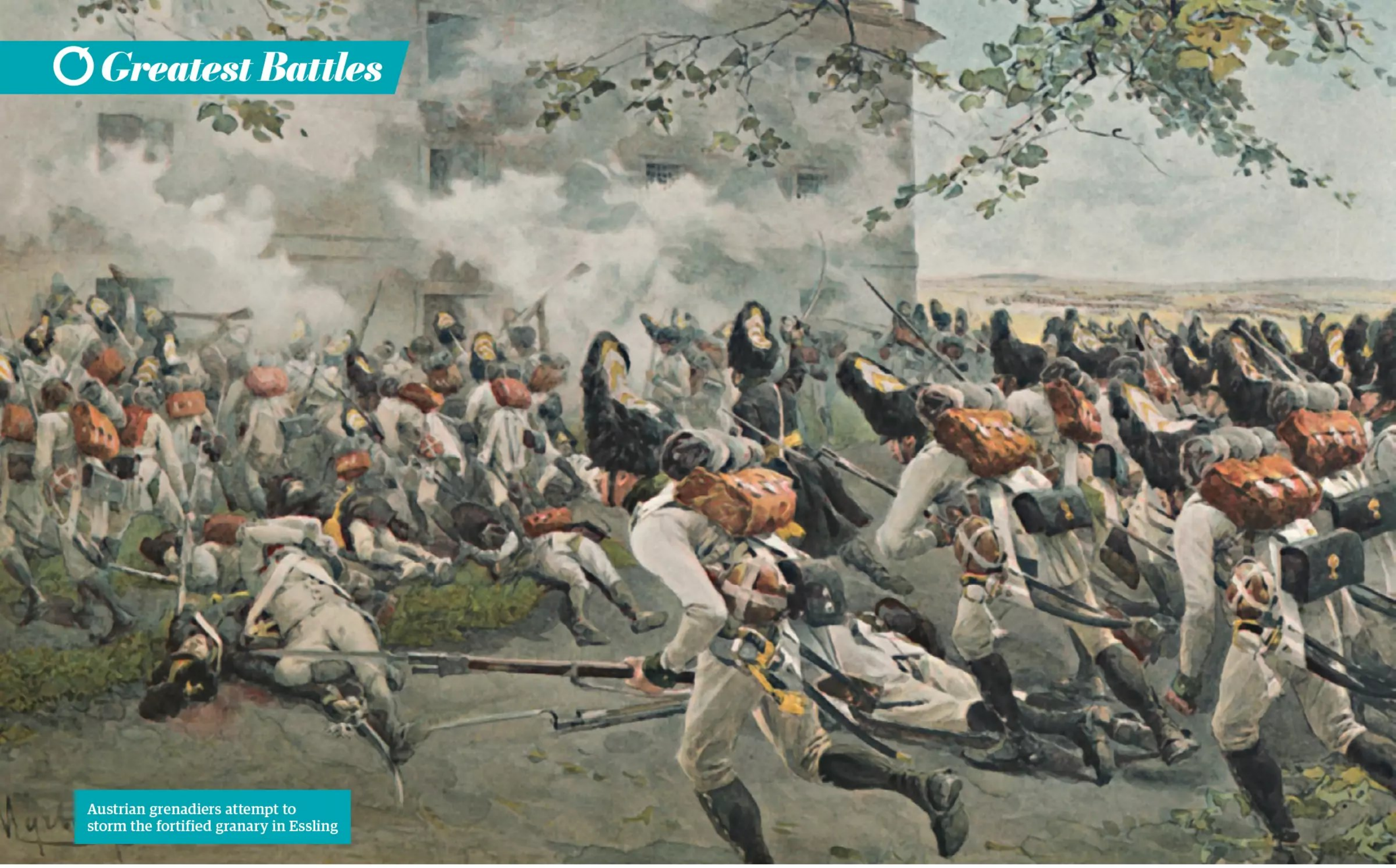
Without relief from Davout's Corps and cut off from Vienna, Napoleon orders his battered and exhausted men to fall back, supported by a rearguard action by Masséna. The Austrians are content to allow the French to cross back to Lobau. During the retreat, Marshal Lannes is struck by a cannonball, a mortal wound that devastates Napoleon.



Archduke Charles rides victorious on the Aspern-Essling battlefield

> "SOLDIERS, WE SHALL FIGHT A BATTLE HERE TOMORROW. ON IT WILL DEPEND THE EXISTENCE OF THE AUSTRIAN MONARCHY, THE THRONE OF OUR GOOD KAISER FRANZ, THE FATE OF EACH ONE OF YOU. THE FATHERLAND, THE MONARCHY, YOUR PARENTS AND YOUR FRIENDS ALL HAVE THEIR EYES UPON YOU, SURE OF YOUR COURAGE AND YOUR STRENGTH!"
>
> ARCHDUKE CHARLES' ORDER OF THE DAY, 20 MAY 1809

Map illustration: Rodo Espín Piñar



Austrian grenadiers attempt to storm the fortified granary in Essling

Aspern. However, they failed to break through against robust resistance, as the Austrians quickly bunched into their crude Battalion Mass formation, suited to their poorly trained conscripts.

Bellegarde's Second Column threw themselves at Aspern again at 6pm, with Archduke Charles riding among the front ranks. With cannonballs and musket shots flying, the beleaguered town filled with choking smoke so thick the men could barely distinguish who they were crossing bayonets with. Both sides fell into a pattern of stalwart defence followed by a partial retreat and vigorous counterattack.

The town changed hands as many as six times. One Austrian account described the reason for the endlessly fluid fight for Aspern: "The steeple, lofty trees, the garrets and the cellars had to be taken before either side could call itself master of the place, and yet the possession was ever of short duration, for no sooner had we taken a street or a house than the French gained another."

The Aspern churchyard was the epicentre of the carnage, defended by men under Masséna's command. He led charges on foot to drive the Austrians from the church five times in three hours.

Fighting in Aspern stained the streets red with the blood of fallen men and horses, with the French defenders suffering 50 percent casualties in the maelstrom. However, it bought Napoleon's engineers the time required to repair the bridge and for divisions under generals Claude Juste Alexandre Legrand and Laurent de Gouvion Saint-Cyr to reinforce the defence of Aspern and bring the situation to a deadlock.

> "WHEN THE CANNON BALLS FELL ON US, THEY CUT DOWN THREE MEN AT A TIME AND KNOCKED THE BEARSKIN CAPS 20 FEET IN THE AIR. ONE BALL STRUCK A WHOLE FILE AND KNOCKED THEM DOWN HEAD OVER HEELS ON TOP OF ME!"
>
> CAPTAIN JEAN-ROCH COIGNET

Meanwhile, the French at Essling were putting up spirited defences and counterattacks led by Napoleon's close friend Marshal Lannes. The Austrian Fourth Column's first attack was quickly turned, although grapeshot struck the veteran General Espagne while he was charging down the retreat. After rescuing this hero of Caldiero and Heilsberg from the field, Lannes' men pushed back a further two Austrian assaults with relative ease. However, as the sun set behind the corpse-strewn town, the French would have looked at the following day with trepidation. The Austrian Fifth Column had finally arrived on the east flank of Essling.

NIGHT FALLS ON THE MARCHFELD

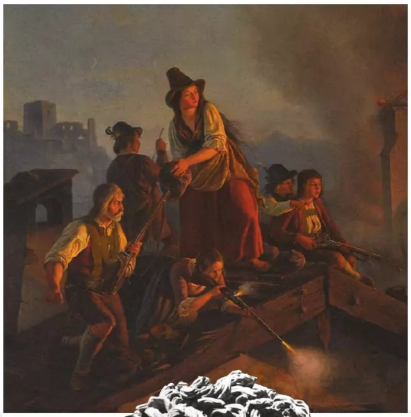
By twilight, fighting across the Marchfeld ground to a halt. Men bivouacked wherever they could, surrounded by the bodies of their dead and dying comrades, barely more than musket range from the enemy. Reflecting on the day's action, Napoleon knew that he had gotten away with a grave mistake. His forces were vulnerable and isolated, backing onto the flooding Danube. Only the talent of his commanders and the discipline of his men had saved the Army of Germany from a crushing defeat, but fractures had started to emerge. An argument broke out between Lannes and Marshal Jean Baptiste Bessières in the night, and Masséna intervened to stop the two men from drawing swords.

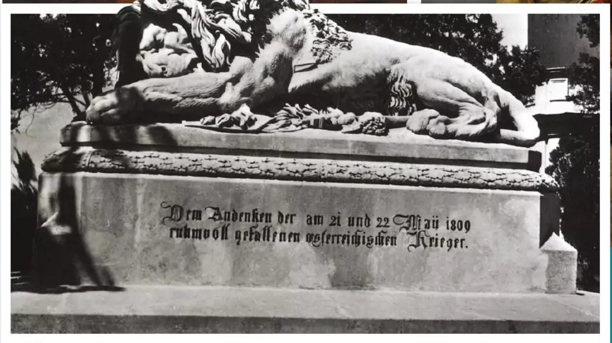
Napoleon had around 31,000 men on the northern side of the river. Knowing that the number of Austrians would far surpass his overnight, he ordered further crossings to be made. The remaining II Corps under the command of Nicolas Oudinot and the Imperial Guard managed to cross while the rudimentary bridge was in operation. The French bridgehead was soon filled with the swarming masses of men who had just crossed and by 3am the Austrian cannons began to boom again, taking aim at this easy target.

The crossings had to stop in the early hours when the bridge ruptured once more. Davout's III Corps was still left on the wrong side of the Danube, although enough reinforcements had been brought forward for Lannes' men in Essling to fall into reserve.

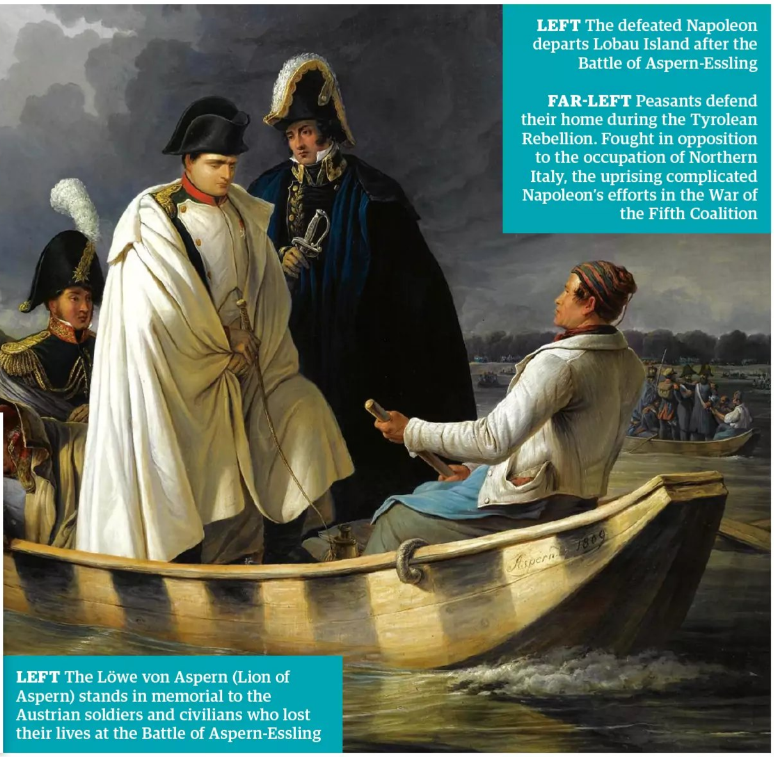
SECOND-DAY DISASTER

The Army of Germany's broken rest ended at 4am to the sound of the Austrians forming up. An hour later, two Austrian columns mounted an attack and pushed the French out of Aspern. Running from Aspern, the Frenchmen looked over their shoulders to see the church ablaze and the





Dem Andenken der am 21 und 22 Mai 1809
ruhmvoll gefallenen öſterreichiſchen Krieger.



LEFT The defeated Napoleon departs Lobau Island after the Battle of Aspern-Essling

FAR-LEFT Peasants defend their home during the Tyrolean Rebellion. Fought in opposition to the occupation of Northern Italy, the uprising complicated Napoleon's efforts in the War of the Fifth Coalition

LEFT The Löwe von Aspern (Lion of Aspern) stands in memorial to the Austrian soldiers and civilians who lost their lives at the Battle of Aspern-Essling

cemetery walls falling down – destroyed by the Austrians to ensure the French couldn't use them as defences again.

As the fighting ramped up in Aspern and Essling, the vast centre of the battlefield remained relatively undisturbed. Napoleon thought the Austrians had overcommitted in attempts to take the two flank settlements, turning the centre into a soft underbelly. This theory was buoyed by reports from captured Austrians that Landwehr manned the centre.

The Landwehr were self-trained reservists, no match for Napoleon's professional troops. He launched a II Corps attack at the centre, led by Lannes, but the charge was hampered somewhat by concentrated fire from well-positioned artillery. General Louis-Vincent-Joseph Saint Hilaire, a hero of Austerlitz and Jena, led the attack and had his left leg blown off. Still, Lannes showed great courage in leading his men onwards with 25 battalions and the Austrians were forced to retreat, while several artillery positions were overrun.

Archduke Charles saw his centre was at a point of collapse and sent in the Grenadier Reserve in a counterattack that began to turn the French advance. Napoleon begrudgingly decided to pull his centre back to form a straight line between Aspern and Essling.

Meanwhile, as noon came, the Danube rose higher still. Fresh ruptures constantly opened on the bridge as trees and boats flowed downstream into the pontoons. Davout's III Corps had no chance of crossing the gushing waters, 2.5m higher and one-third wider than at the start of the battle. A new fear grew among the French command that Lobau would become fully submerged, trapping them on the north bank.

After the failure to break through the centre, fighting concentrated again at Essling. Baron Joseph von Dedovich's men had been thrown back from Essling seven times, but their eighth attack managed to force General Mouton's beleaguered three battalions of Young Guard fusiliers out of the settlement. Soon after, Mouton received orders to retake Essling. General Rapp, who had been commanded to bring two battalions of Young Guard towards Aspern, spotted Mouton preparing to launch a doomed attack.

Rapp rode over to Mouton and shared a plan to disobey Napoleon's orders by joining Mouton's assault on Essling. Going against Napoleon's wishes while in command of his treasured guard was unthinkable, but Mouton was eventually persuaded after Rapp reassured him: "If it comes off, we'll both get the credit; if it doesn't, I'll take the blame." The combined five battalions of Young Guard charged Essling one last time and quickly pushed the Austrians back out.

These final heroics in Essling earned Mouton and Rapp acclaim but were not enough to turn the tide of battle. Napoleon ordered a complete withdrawal back across the Danube, supported by rearguard actions from Lannes and Masséna. The final Frenchmen wouldn't make it onto Lobau until the early hours, with Masséna's men destroying the bridge behind them.

A SHORT-LIVED TRIUMPH

Until the makeshift bridge to the south bank of the Danube from Lobau was repaired, the French survivors had to wait on the island, tormented by the victorious Austrian soldiers singing *Te Deum* through the night. They survived on horse meat stew and water drawn from the Danube, tainted by the bodies of their comrades. The scale of the losses for both sides was horrifying.

The Austrians lost 24,000 to the French 22,000, with most of the corpses remaining unburied on the Marchfeld for weeks after. Scores of the French casualties were a result of the relentless Austrian artillery, which had fired 53,000 rounds to the French 24,300. Napoleon also lost two divisional generals (Saint-Hilaire and d'Espagne) and his close friend Lannes, which demoralised the whole army. Despite losing more men, the Austrians had claimed their first significant victory over the French in a decade and demonstrated their progress since Austerlitz. Moreover, the Austrians had shattered the myth of Napoleon's invincibility.

It was six weeks before Napoleon crossed the Danube again. He spent this time preparing defences for the bridges and bringing his strength up to 188,000. The result was the Battle of Wagram. Here, Aspern and Essling were again critical, positioned on the French's left flank, while much of the battlefield stretched eastward. It was taken from the French after heavy Austrian shelling, while on the right flank, Davout's III Corps showed what could have been if they had made it across the river at Aspern-Essling. His advance rolled on steadily, an unstoppable force despite Archduke Charles placing more units in his path. With his army at the point of collapse, Archduke Charles held out for relief from his brother Archduke John that never came.

The War of the Fifth Coalition came to an end six days later at the Battle of Znaim, when the French caught up with Archduke Charles as he attempted to retreat north into Bohemia. In the following deal, the Habsburgs ceded territories in Croatia, Dalmatia and Slovenia, losing 3.5 million subjects and seeing their army reduced to 150,000. ○

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What If...

HITLER HAD NOT BEEN APPEASED BY THE ALLIES?

If Britain and France had resisted the Nazis' expansionist ambitions in 1938, could WWII have been prevented?

INTERVIEW WITH

© D Stone

Dr David R Stone

Stone teaches in the Strategy and Policy department of the US Naval War College. He received his PhD in Russian history from Yale University and is the author of numerous books and dozens of articles on Russian and Soviet military history. His most recent book is titled, *The Russian Army in the Great War: The Eastern Front, 1914-1917.*

• These views are David's own and not any official position of the US government.

Between the end of the First World War and the late 1930s, Europe became a very different place. The communist regime in Russia brought with it images of Stalin as an evil boogeyman, preying on democracy and civil liberties. Fascism had found a small foothold in Britain itself, with its leader Oswald Mosley advocating peace with Nazi Germany rather than war. And Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was following a policy of appeasement towards Hitler, desperate to avoid a repeat of 1914-18. But there were voices with an opposing view that said Hitler was not to be trusted and action needed to be taken to curb his ambitions. What if those voices had managed to win the day?

To stand up to Hitler, what different approach would the Allies have needed?

The big difference would've been in domestic politics. Standing up to Hitler would have required political leadership willing to articulate the danger that Hitler presented, and a population willing to think about fighting another war so soon after the terrible losses of the First World War. Leadership was key. Neville Chamberlain consistently saw communism as a threat as great as or greater than fascism and was reluctant to align with the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany.

At what point could the Allies have taken decisive action?

Many people focus on the Czechoslovak crisis in May 1938 and the Munich Agreement later that year, and I agree with that.

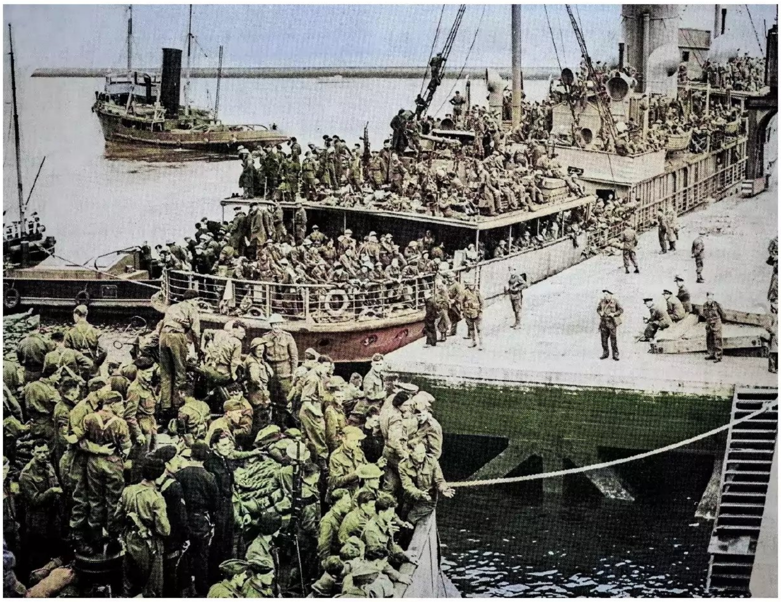
Up until Czechoslovakia, Hitler's moves had been against the Treaty of Versailles, which many saw as being unjust to Germany. He had presented his goals as bringing German populations into Germany. In Czechoslovakia, Hitler focused on the Sudeten German minority, but that would have involved partitioning a sovereign state.

The Czechs were willing to fight rather than give in to Hitler, but in the Munich Conference of September 1938 Britain and France agreed to grant Hitler Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland. The Czechs weren't invited to the talks. Six months later, Hitler absorbed the rest of the country.

What if Great Britain and France had decided to stand and fight in September 1938?

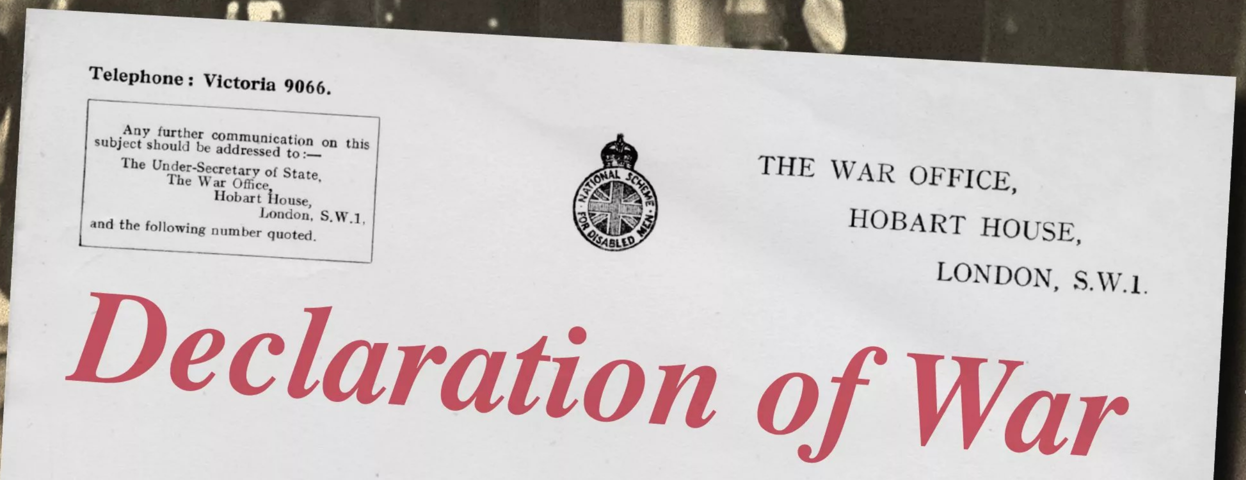
Czechoslovakia would not have been a pushover. It was the most industrialised state in Eastern Europe and possessed a substantial defence industry of its own. The Czech army was a serious force, though not at the level of Hitler's Wehrmacht. The Czechs also would have been fighting on the defensive and using the substantial defensive fortifications they had built in the mountains that ring Bohemia, the heartland of the Czechoslovak state.

▶



RIGHT Allied troops are evacuated from Dunkirk, France, in 1940 - a defeat that may have been avoided with decisive action in 1938

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



Telephone : Victoria 9066.

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to:—
The Under-Secretary of State,
The War Office,
Hobart House,
London, S.W.1.
and the following number quoted.

NATIONAL SCHEME FOR DISABLED MEN

THE WAR OFFICE,
HOBART HOUSE,
LONDON, S.W.1.

Declaration of War

THE PAST

1938

PEACE IN OUR TIME

Many people were understandably terrified at the prospect of another major war in Europe, and the stakes for British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain could not have been higher. What if the Great War was not 'the war to end all wars'? Painted into a corner by Hitler at the Munich Conference of 1938, Chamberlain was convinced it would not be him who had blood on his hands. There were those who felt Germany had been harshly treated after WWI and deserved to regain some of its territory. Chamberlain infamously swallowed Hitler's promises of peace hook, line and sinker.

1939

DEAL WITH THE DEVILS

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was a trade-off between Hitler and Stalin. Vital Russian raw materials would be received by Germany in exchange for industrial hardware, but Hitler's real motivation for signing the pact was neutralising his Eastern Front so he could throw everything he had at the West. In return for sitting on the sidelines, Stalin would piggyback on a Nazi invasion to gain more territory in Poland and the Baltic states, thereby starting his own expansionist ambitions. Despite their dislike of the Soviet regime, Britain and France lost a strong potential ally against Nazi Germany, at least for now.

1939

WAR ERUPTS

As the year progressed, Hitler's real plans began to reveal themselves. If alarm bells for the Allies hadn't been ringing before, they definitely were now. Dismissive of any prior agreements, Hitler began to upgrade his navy and, in complete contravention of the Munich Agreement, the Nazis annexed Bohemia and Moravia. With the writing on the wall, the British and French were forced into open solidarity with Poland. But Hitler was desperate for access to the Baltic, and Polish territory was in his way. On 1 September German forces surge into Poland, with Soviet troops taking their slice of territory shortly afterwards. On 3 September, Britain has no choice but to declare war on Germany.

> "If the Allies were going to fight, 1938 was a much better time than 1939"

The German army that would have fought in 1938 was not the same force that rolled through Poland and France in 1939 and 1940. Hitler was still rebuilding his forces. Many of the German tanks in Poland and France were actually Czech tanks that Hitler had won without firing a shot when he took over Czechoslovakia.

There's strong evidence that if the Allies were going to fight, 1938 was a much better time than 1939. Both sides were busy rearming, but fighting in 1938 would have added Czech forces and Czech industry to the Allied side, and at the very least would not have handed over Czechoslovakia's arsenal of weapons to Hitler without a fight.

What would've been the Soviet Union's reaction to this?

The Soviet role in 1938 is perhaps the best argument in favour of choosing that moment to make a stand. The Soviet Union had alliance treaties with both France and Czechoslovakia. Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov had spent the 1930s promoting collective security as the best response to the threat of Hitler and Nazism. Litvinov's wife, Ivy, was British and Litvinov had spent several years living in Britain. He understood the West quite well.

Of course, a treaty to defend Czechoslovakia doesn't necessarily mean that the Soviets would have honoured it, but they had signed the treaty in the first place because of the danger of Nazi Germany. And, in fact, the Soviets showed every sign in September 1938 of preparing to fight for the Czechs. The Soviets were mobilising their western border military districts; that means getting troops into their units and moving towards the border in preparation for war. The Red Army was enormous, with a massive fleet of tanks and aircraft. This was a serious threat to Hitler's plans.

Potential Soviet assistance against Hitler was wasted when Britain and France sold out the Czechs in the Munich Agreement. Stalin clearly took a lesson that Britain and France could not be trusted to stand up against Hitler. He had always suspected that what the Western powers really wanted was to see the Soviet Union tangled up in a war against Germany, a war that they would sit out. That's probably actually pretty close to what Chamberlain would have preferred – Chamberlain long believed that Stalin was a threat just as serious as Hitler. A year later, in August 1939, the Allies paid the price when Stalin aligned himself with Hitler.

Stalin was obviously no saint, but in 1938 he did not see Germany grabbing Czechoslovakia as being in line with Soviet national interests.

How might Hitler and Germany have reacted to non-appeasement or acts of resistance?

Here we can differentiate between Hitler and at least some of his military elite. Hitler's reputation was built on the idea of him being a winner, moving from victory to victory. Add that to his highly developed sense of his own genius and it seems likely he would've wanted to roll the dice and go ahead with war against Czechoslovakia. If Britain and France had made it clear they would fight, it's likely that Hitler would have gone ahead.

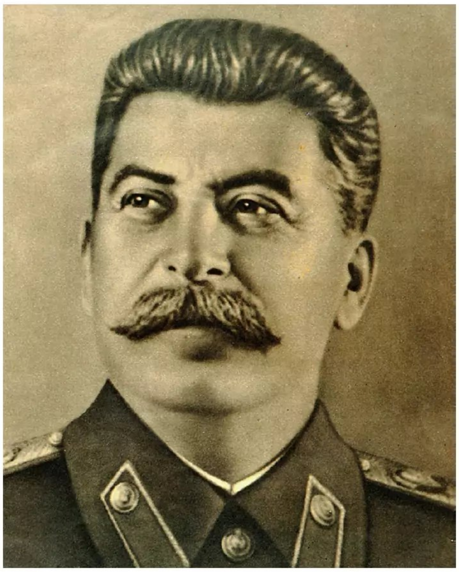
The German generals are, however, another question. They had all lived through the First World War and seen what happened to Germany when it tried to fight a two-front war. We know that at least some among the German generals were plotting against Hitler. It's certainly possible that Hitler would have faced a coup or assassination attempt if he'd tried to get Germany into another war that his generals thought was unwinnable. None of them were pacifists, and they were all glad

BELOW Before WWII Churchill was vocal of his mistrust for Hitler

to see Germany breaking out of the limits imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, but that doesn't mean they wanted to see Germany fighting against Britain, France and Russia.

How could the Allies succeed? And what role, if any, would the United States have played?

The big problem for the Allies to solve, if they managed to get their domestic populations on board, was how to handle Czechoslovakia's other neighbours.



ABOVE
US forces in Tokyo Bay as the Japanese formally surrender, 2 September 1945

BELOW
In 1938 Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was seen by many in the West as no less dangerous than Hitler to European security

The Soviet Union had an alliance with Czechoslovakia but did not actually share a land border. That means that they have to cross either Polish or Romanian territory. Both countries were very concerned that if the Soviets came in, they might not leave. In addition, Poland was interested in some Czech territory. Solving those problems would require skilful diplomacy.

It's doubtful that the United States would have played much of a role here. The US public was slower than European publics to see a direct threat, even if Franklin D Roosevelt did see Hitler as a long-term problem. The Americans still had a lot of confidence in the ability of the Allies, and particularly the French army, to keep Hitler in check. That made for a lot of scrambling when France fell in 1940.

How would the outbreak of war in 1938 have changed Europe?

If the Allies stood up to Hitler in 1938, and the Soviet Union joined them as it looked as though it was preparing to do, it's doubtful Germany would have won. That doesn't mean Germany ends up occupied, but Hitler is humiliated and perhaps out of power. That also means that the Soviet Union would have played a big role in Eastern Europe from 1938 on, though perhaps not as dominant as it was after 1945. We might have seen a type of Cold War; with Germany cut down to size, would the Soviet threat have loomed larger? ○

THE POSSIBILITY

1938

KEPT BOXED IN

Following the stance against Germany taken by Britain and France, with the cooperation of Russia, Nazi influence in Europe would be substantially curtailed. The situation within Germany itself, with Hitler no longer able to fulfil his promises to the German people, may have become more volatile. The once-omnipotent dictator, whose passionate oratory held millions under his spell, would now be just another flawed politician, vulnerable to attack from those desperate for change. But a deposed Hitler would still be a threat, and his assassination would be a likely course of action. After ridding itself of the Nazi leader the people of Germany would desperately want to build better relations with the rest of Europe.

1940-45

THE BEAR GROWLS

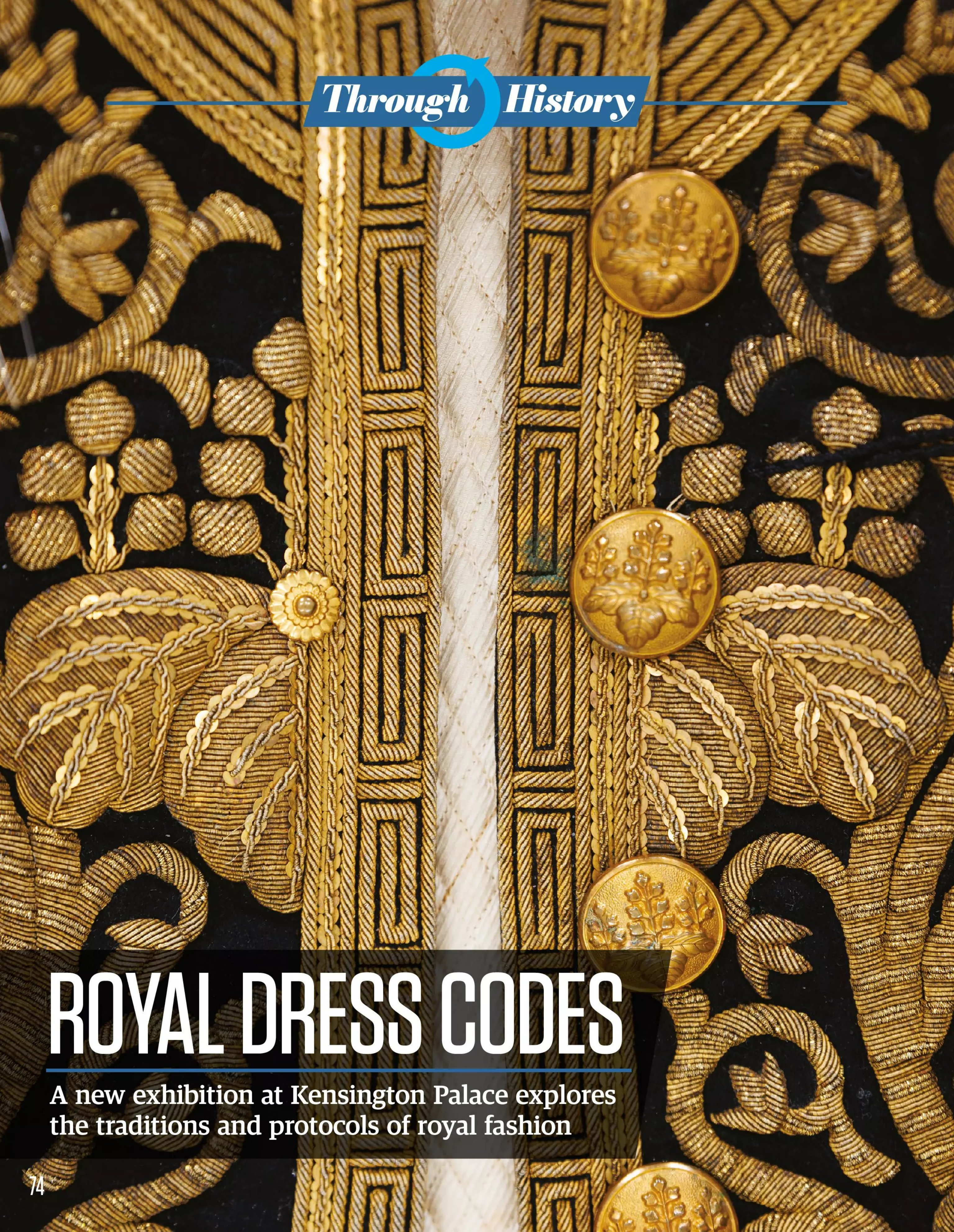
By uniting with the Allies against Germany from the start, Stalin and the Soviet Union would've had a lot to gain. Hitler had been desperate to avoid a war on two fronts, and with the Nazis caught in a vice between East and West, their gains in territory would be reduced. With Poland and Czechoslovakia supported by the Allies, German advances into the USSR may never have happened, and Hitler would've been unable to force the retreat at Dunkirk in 1940. With Germany defeated, Stalin may not have had the large territory gains he won in 1945, but loyalty to the Allies would gain him the respect he could leverage when the time suited him.

1945 ONWARDS

OTHER SIDE OF THE POND

With British, French and Commonwealth forces fighting alongside Russia against Germany from 1938 onwards, military assistance on the Continent from the USA would've been less urgent. With access to more of Europe and its resources, Britain would've been less reliant on the Atlantic convoys to keep its people fed. Having avoided the European war, the US would be able to channel all of is resources into defeating Japan. Once that was achieved, the US could remain in isolation. However, post-war Europe, even without large Soviet gains of the Eastern Bloc, would still be a place of potential friction. And without US involvement and with no creation of NATO, the world would've remained a volatile place.

All images: © Alamy



ROYAL DRESS CODES

A new exhibition at Kensington Palace explores the traditions and protocols of royal fashion

The British royal family have long been at the forefront of fashion trends. With access to top designers and their official appearances highly publicised, royal figures have not only dressed to impress but have also influenced fashion trends. However, while public figures and famous people in other fields are able to wear what they want when they want, the royals have historically been subject to strict dress codes that are designed to uphold the public image of the institution. Now, a new exhibition at Kensington Palace in London is displaying some of the most iconic and exciting pieces of fashion to shine new light on royal dress codes.

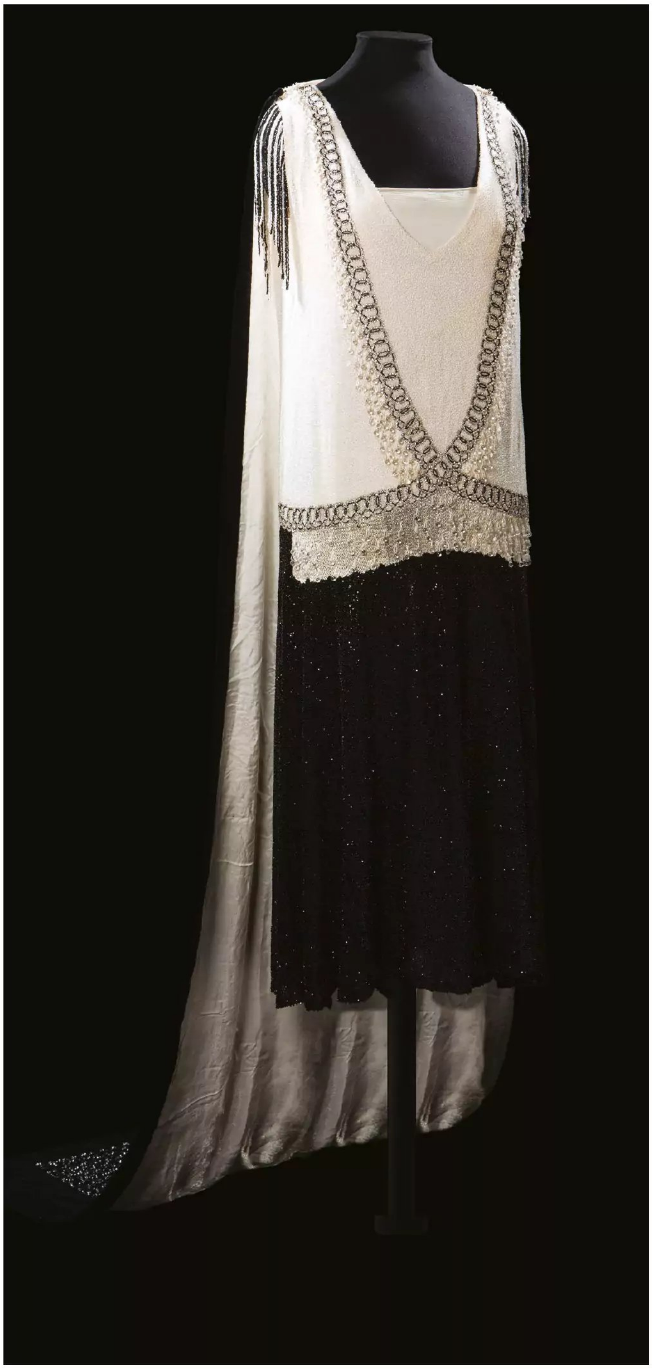
"Showcasing both instantly recognisable and rarely seen highlights from the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection, the display will explore the codes and conventions of royal clothing, and the powerful impact fashion can make when boundaries are pushed and dress codes evolve," says Historic Royal Palaces. Selected from over 10,000 items in the royal dress collection, a plethora of items are on display that represent over 500 years of royal fashion history, including garments worn by Queen Elizabeth II, Queen Victoria and Diana, Princess of Wales. Access to this fascinating exhibition is included in general admission tickets to Kensington Palace.

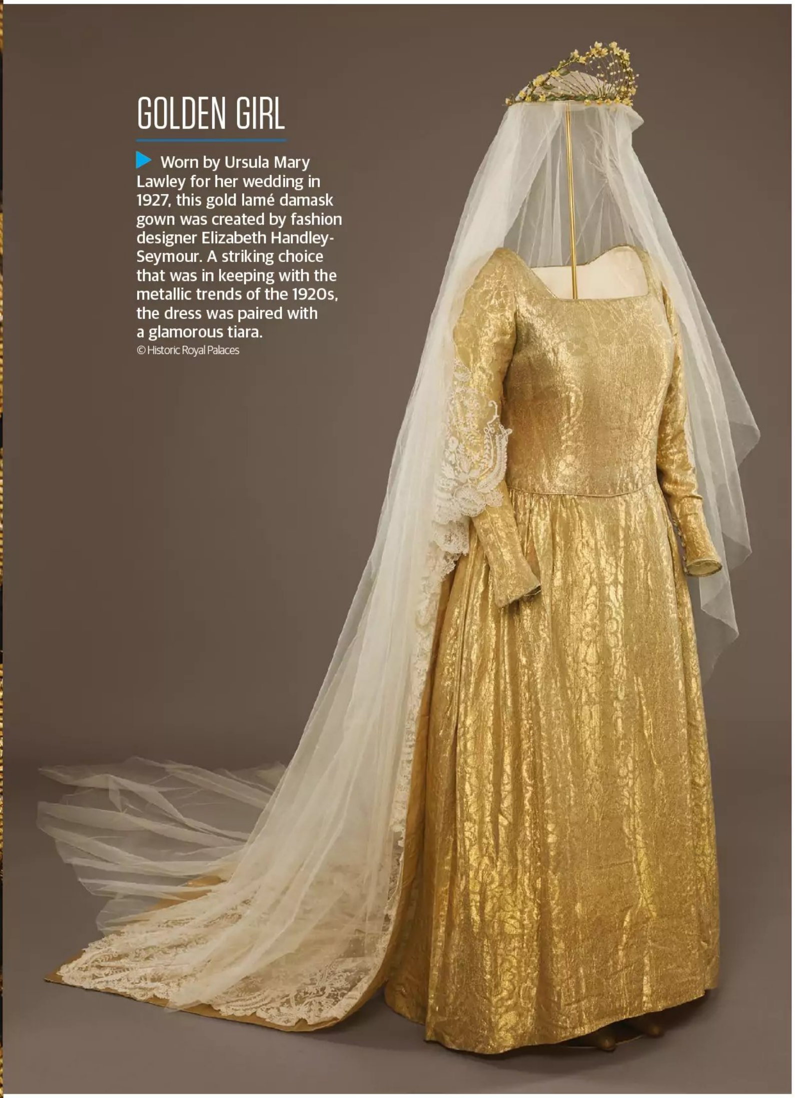
FAR EAST FASHION

◀ Dating from the early 20th century, this Japanese court suit is just one of the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection's many male uniforms. The rare suit has undergone conservation by experts to prepare and protect the delicate garment when it goes on display.
© Historic Royal Palaces

PALACE PERFECTION

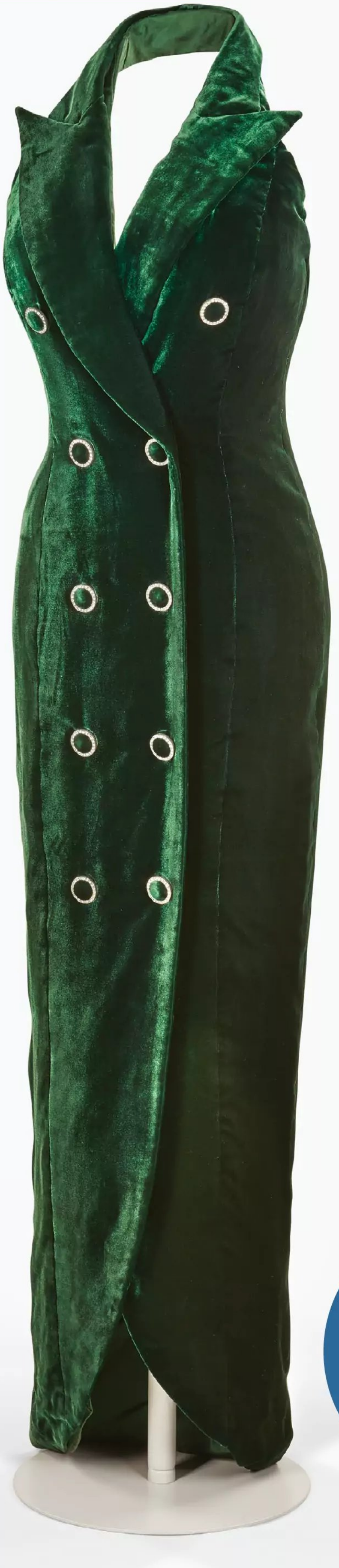
▶ An example of 1920s style and elegance, this court dress was worn by Lady Annie Holcroft during her presentation at Buckingham Palace in 1928. The chic outfit, with an attached train, was made by Reville.
© Historic Royal Palaces





GOLDEN GIRL

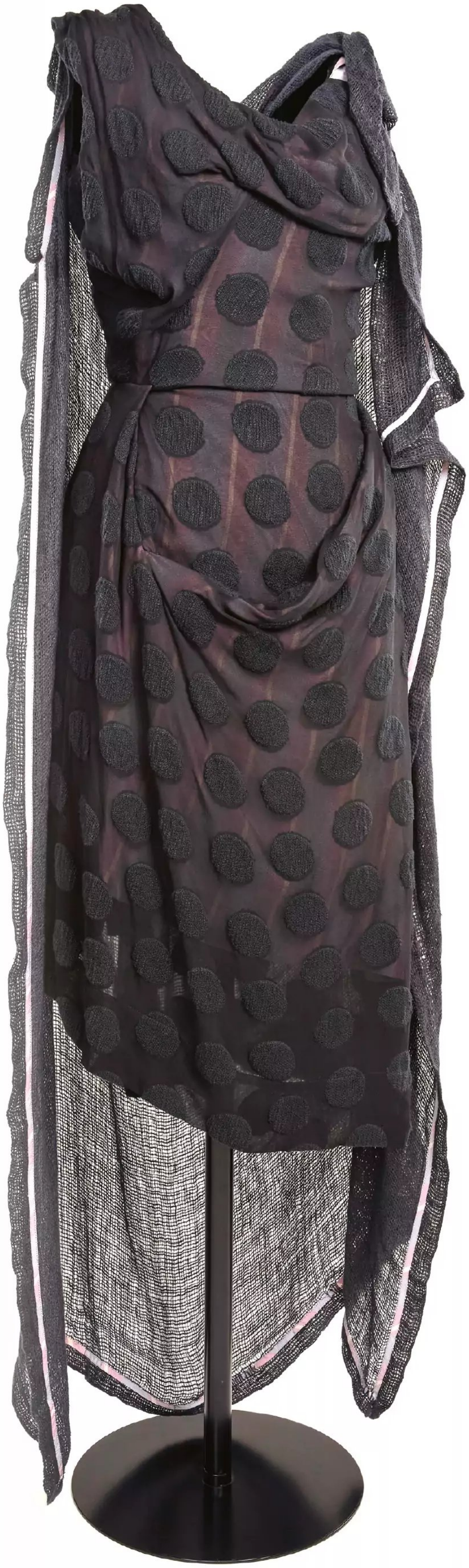
▶ Worn by Ursula Mary Lawley for her wedding in 1927, this gold lamé damask gown was created by fashion designer Elizabeth Handley-Seymour. A striking choice that was in keeping with the metallic trends of the 1920s, the dress was paired with a glamorous tiara.
© Historic Royal Palaces



FASHIONABLE FUNDRAISER

◀ This green silk velvet tuxedo-style dress, designed by Catherine Walker, was one of several outfits belonging to Diana, Princess of Wales that were auctioned off to raise money for cancer and HIV/AIDS charities in 1997. Walker was one of Diana's favourite designers.

© Historic Royal Palaces, Catherine Walker

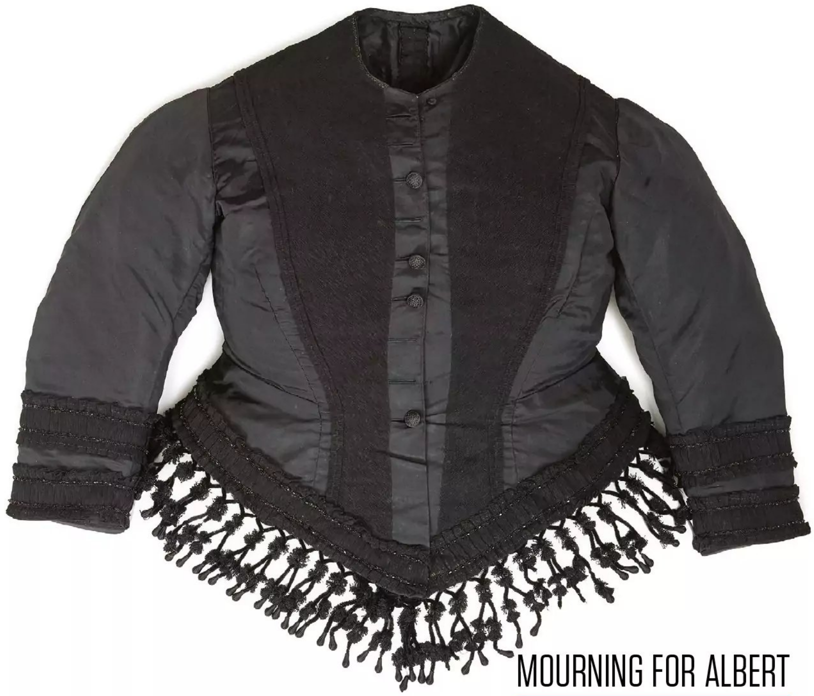


DAZZLING DAME

▶ Created by Vivienne Westwood, this black polka dot ensemble was worn by the fashion designer herself when she was invested as a dame in 2006. Its deconstructed appearance reflected Westwood's "rule-breaking values and politics".

© Historic Royal Palaces, Vivienne Westwood

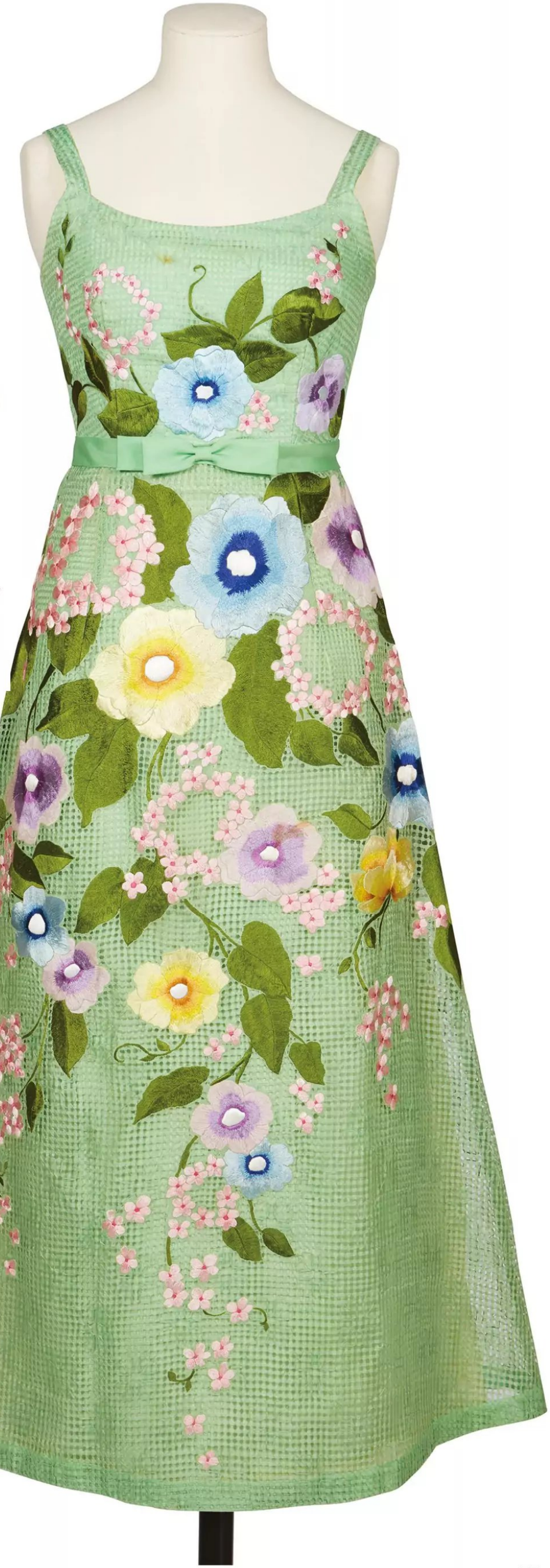
Dress Codes at Kensington Palace in London runs until 30 November 2025



MOURNING FOR ALBERT

▲ This bodice, which was part of Queen Victoria's royal wardrobe, will be on display to the public for the first time. It was worn by the monarch in the years following the death of her husband, Prince Albert, after which she only wore black.

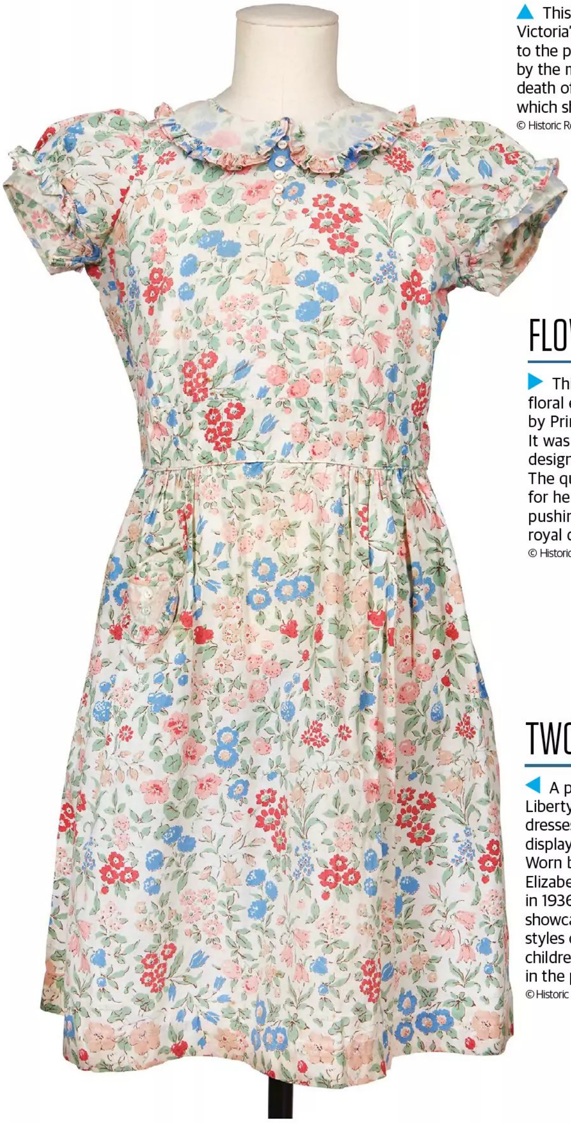
© Historic Royal Palaces



FLOWER POWER

▶ This embroidered green and floral evening dress was worn by Princess Margaret in 1980. It was designed by Filipino designer Jose 'Pitoy' Moreno. The queen's sister was known for her bold fashion choices and pushing the boundaries of the royal dress codes.

© Historic Royal Palaces, Jose Pitoy Moreno



TWO FOR ONE

◀ A pair of these Liberty print cotton dresses will be on display at the exhibition. Worn by the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret in 1936, these dresses showcase the matching styles of the royal children as they grew up in the public eye.

© Historic Royal Palaces

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

FROM THE CREATOR OF PEAKY BLINDERS
A THOUSAND BLOWS
Disney+
Original series | February 21

© Disney+

A THOUSAND BLOWS

Steven Knight's show depicts Victorian London with the gloves off.

Certificate: 12A **Available on:** Disney+ **Cast:** Stephen Graham, Erin Doherty, Malachi Kirby **Released:** Out now

As its title suggests, *A Thousand Blows* is a story about people who've been knocked about by life from the day they were born. Steven Knight, of *Peaky Blinders* fame, has set his sights on a Victorian female gang in London, the Forty Elephants, led by hustler Mary Carr (Erin Doherty). She's a young lass who declares her ambition is to "steal from the top" (meaning the top of society). There are high hopes that this will be British television's next hit series. Will lightning strike twice for Knight?

The origins of *A Thousand Blows* do not strictly reside with the acclaimed screenwriter. A version of the project was brought to him by actress Hannah Walters (also appearing in a supporting role). She was fascinated by little-known Jamaican boxer Hezekiah Moscow (Malachi Kirby) and his mysterious life in the East End. Knight, at the same time intrigued by Mary Carr and the Forty Elephants, decided to put the two subjects together and create a new slice of stylish, gritty historical fiction.

Relying on newspapers and transcripts from court cases, rather than history books, Knight weaved together the stories of two people who didn't meet in real life, but who as characters were perfect for telling his latest tale about lives lived outside of everyday society. The same sense of working-class swagger and cool criminality has crossed over from *Peaky Blinders*, a tone that owes a debt as much to 1960s cinema as it does to Guy Ritchie's 1990s gangster flicks.

Thanks to Knight's magic touch and Disney+ money, *A Thousand Blows* looks tip-top. The lighting is suitably gloomy, the grimy metropolitan sets impressively designed and photographed. It is, after all, set in London's East End, infamous in the 1880s as site of the Jack the Ripper murders and, a few years later, American author Jack London's extraordinary *People of the Abyss* (1903).

Hallie Rubenhold was drafted in as a historical consultant – her book *The Five: The Untold Lives of the Women Killed by Jack the Ripper* is a masterpiece of historical research. Yet Knight's quest for historical authenticity didn't get as far as the actors' teeth – they all sport Hollywood-style pearly whites. Victorian dentistry in the East End must have been streets ahead of today!

The teeth issue are thankfully a minor quibble, because *A Thousand Blows* really does look to be a contender for masterclass telly, with Erin Doherty especially on superb form as Mary Carr. With the tongue of a street philosopher and the heart of a lion, she wants all of London to know her name. Also doing excellent work is Stephen Graham as the villainous Sugar Goodson, bare knuckle pugilist supreme. He is a menacing – often scowling – figure, built like a brick privy and an imposing sight even though he's all of five feet six inches tall,

In another indication of the show's excellence is the fact that it was commissioned for a second series before the first one had even aired. That's some Mary Carr-sized confidence. ***MC***

★★★★☆

Reviews by
Martyn Conterio, Jackson van Uden, Catherine Curzon, Callum McKelvie

STRIKE: LABOR, UNIONS AND RESISTANCE IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Discover the brutal realities of the Roman working world

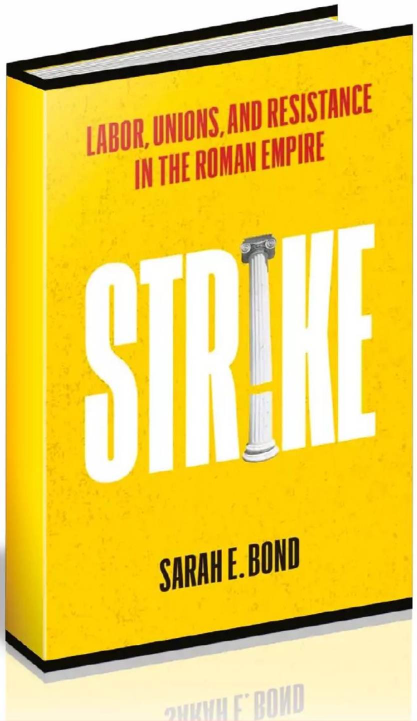
Author: Sarah E Bond **Publisher:** Yale University Press **Price:** £25 **Released:** 25 March 2025

This powerful book investigates the Roman Empire through the little-explored angle of its workers. While on the surface this topic might appear daunting, *Strike* is anything but. Bond has crafted a very readable book that loses none of its academic rigor. She makes complex areas of Roman plebian life simple to understand and breaks down the notion of collectives across the Roman world. Her use of contemporary sources like Plutarch gives the reader a greater understanding of how associations and collectives came about, operated, resisted senatorial and dictatorial pressures, and taught each new generation of Romans. The drawing of comparisons between the Roman world, medieval guilds and today's world make the concepts in this book easy to follow.

Bond begins *Strike* with an important acknowledgment. As she discusses the issues encountered when writing about this aspect of history, she touches on the murkiness of sources and the reluctance of previous generations of scholars to connect the dots between trade unions, medieval guilds and Roman Associations.

Our favourite part of this book is the powerful example of how plebians exerted collective pressure on politicians to improve the lives of ordinary people. By shining a light on the struggles of those in the lower reaches of Roman civilisation, this book serves as a poignant reminder of the power of the people. ***JVU***

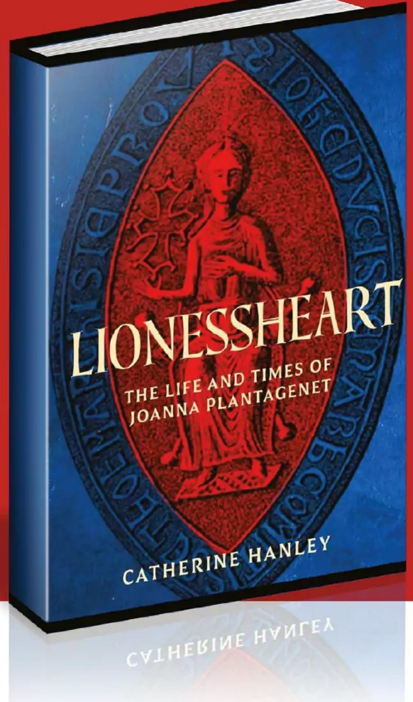
★★★★☆



LIONESSHEART: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOANNA PLANTAGENET

A fascinating study of a little-known princess.

Author: Catherine Hanley **Publisher:** This History Press **Price:** £22 **Released:** Out now



Most people have heard of Richard the Lionheart, but his sister Joanna Plantagenet has until now remained a rather more enigmatic historical figure. Destined to become Queen of Sicily and Countess of Toulouse, this youngest daughter of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine was no shrinking violet. To the contrary, she lived a life rich in adventure, and in *Lionessheart: The Life and Times of Joanna Plantagenet,* Catherine Hanley sets out to bring her fully into the spotlight.

The supporting cast of this excellent book is packed with famous names, many of them male and many of them the subject of innumerable biographies. Hanley never allows these characters to dominate, but instead ensures that the focus remains on Joanna. She also teases out the other women in Joanna's life who have, in many cases, remained woefully under-explored until now. In doing so, she brings the medieval world vividly to life, recreating the always fascinating and sometimes dangerous world in which Joanna moved.

Lionessheart benefits from the author's far-reaching research, aided by Hanley's clear affection for and expertise in this period of history. She clearly understands the powerplays and gender politics to which Joanna was subjected and evokes them with a keen eye for historical detail. Supported by a selection of excellent illustrations, maps and genealogical tables, as well as a comprehensive bibliography, this biography should appeal to a broad range of readers, from fans of all things medieval to those who seek a deeper dive into women's history. ***CC***

★★★★★

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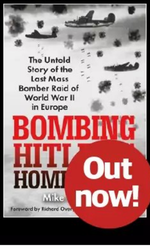


Bombing Hitler's Hometown

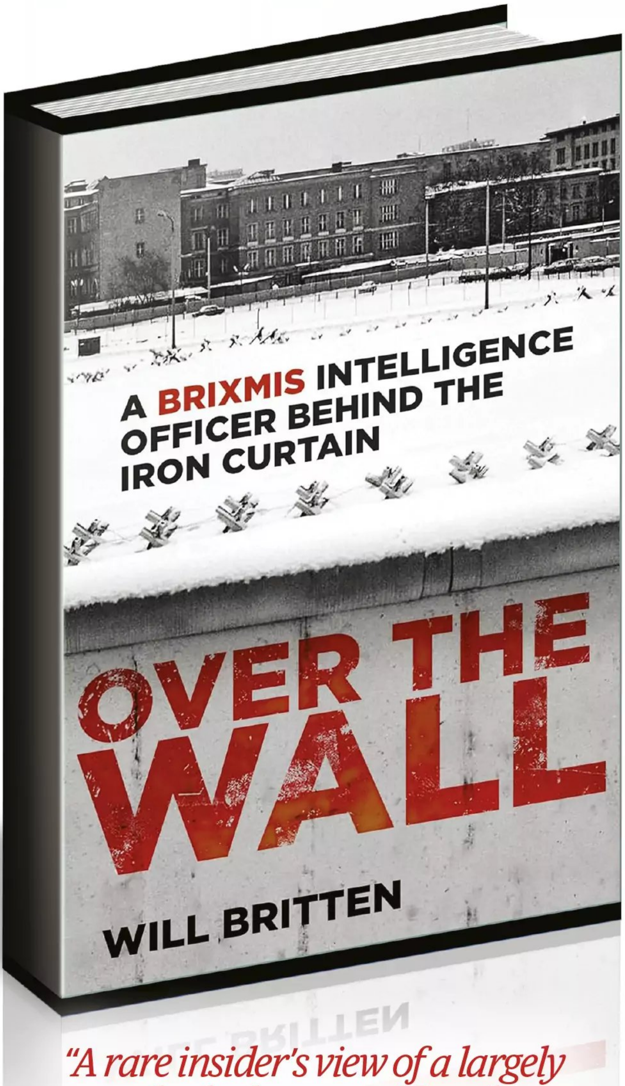
Author Mike Croissant **Price** £12.99 **Publisher** August Books

Throughout this well-written and meticulously researched book the reader is placed right in the heart of the action, both in the air and on the ground. Notably, Croissant follows both the experiences of the inhabitants of Linz in Austria and the aircrew who were shot down. This book is a worthy tribute to human fortitude, weaving a rich and textured tale about the horrors of aerial warfare during WWII.

OVER THE WALL:
A BRIXMIS INTELLIGENCE OFFICER BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

Learn about the secret military mission on the frontline of the Cold War

Author: Will Britten **Publisher:** The History Press **Price:** £22 **Released:** 10 April 2025



"A rare insider's view of a largely overlooked aspect of frontline Cold War espionage"

Created shortly after the establishment of the Allied zones in Germany following the end of the Second World war, BRIXMIS was the name given to a British military liaison mission that ran from 1946 to 1990. Uniquely, BRIXMIS officers were granted permission to undertake tours of the Soviet zone. However, despite the original intention for BRIXMIS and its Soviet equivalent SOXMIS to remain purely diplomatic, they quickly took advantage of their positions and developed a new purpose: espionage.

Although Will Britten's book is not the first about BRIXMIS, what sets it apart is Britten himself, who served in the British Army between 1978 and 2005. This included, in the latter years of the Cold War, being posted to Berlin to serve in BRIXMIS as a "part-time tourer". While Britten covers the history of the mission and events that occurred prior to his working within it, *Over The Wall* serves primarily as a memoir.

When undertaking tours of East Berlin, BRIXMIS officers were required to wear uniforms and travel into the Soviet zone in clearly marked vehicles. Certain areas were restricted, but that didn't always stop the mission members. Being intelligence-gathering operations, they were not without danger, and Britten demonstrates this by beginning his book with a shocking account of an incident in which a BRIXMIS officer was shot.

As well as having these personal accounts *Over The Wall* also gives us Britten's observations, whether it's his regret at not having "half-inched" a Soviet mission sign, stories of the "much used" BRIXMIS Barbecue, or his recounting of an incident in which he was detained by Soviet forces in the city of Halle. For obvious reasons, memoirs about military intelligence work are relatively scarce, and Britten's willingness to get personal is a true delight that makes *Over The Wall* a rare treat (even if some observations like "Belgian drivers are generally poor, unpredictable and seemingly distracted" are a little offbeat).

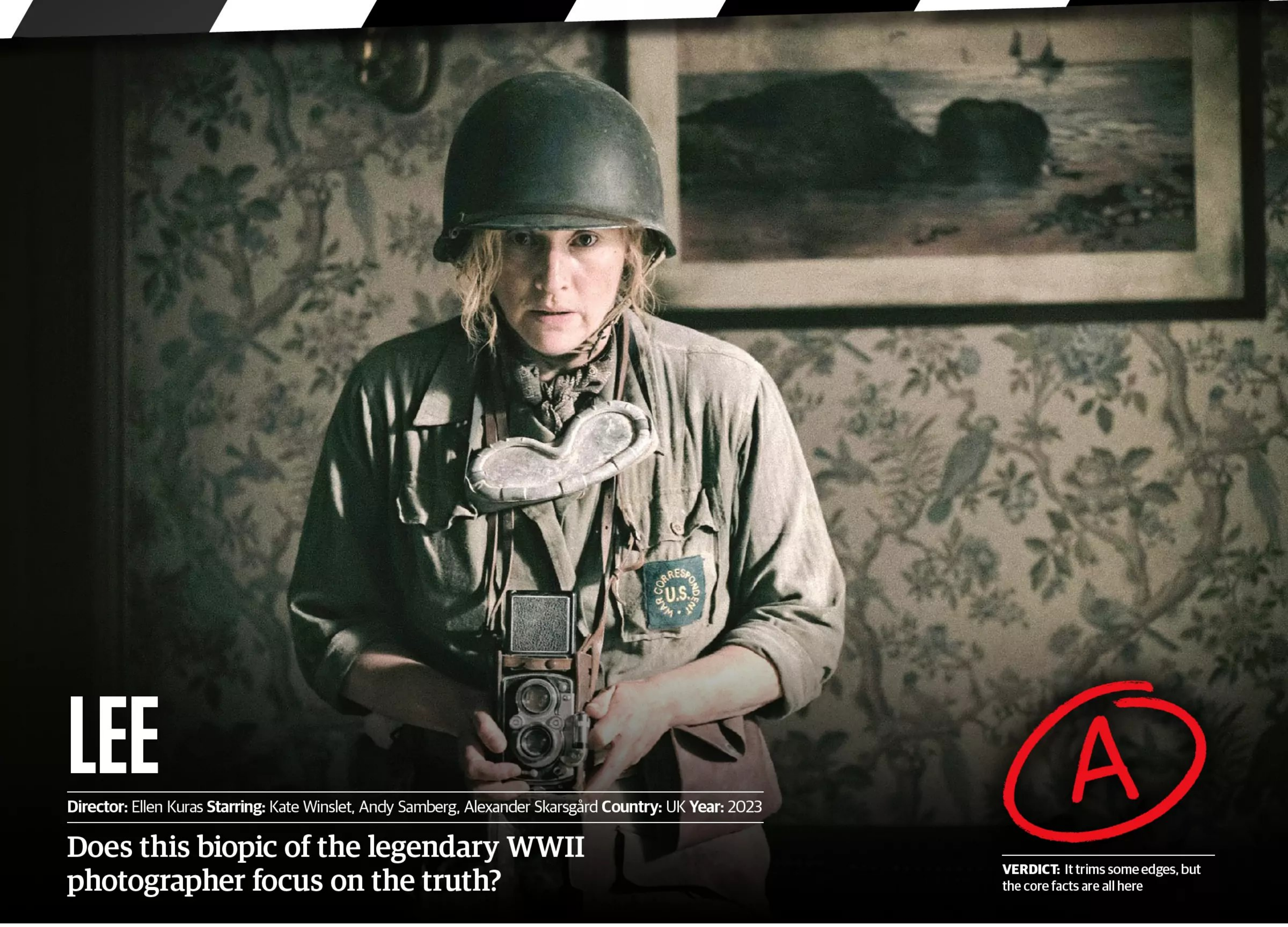
For the most part, though, his approach is what makes *Over The Wall* such as success. His relaxed, casual tone has the feel of an informal seminar or an afternoon conversation in the pub as Britten recounts his Cold War stories. He is also fully aware of his audience, making sure to explain the basic functions of BRIXMIS and how it operated, as well as 'remind' his readers of some rudimentary Cold War facts. But he is cautious not to simplify things too much.

Over the Wall is a delight for readers interested in the Cold War and its murky world of espionage, a rare insider's view of a largely overlooked aspect of the frontline between West and East. The book serves as a perfect introduction to BRIXMIS and its operations, while also providing much that will interest those already familiar with the secretive mission's history. ***CM***

★★★★☆

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen



LEE

Director: Ellen Kuras **Starring:** Kate Winslet, Andy Samberg, Alexander Skarsgård **Country:** UK **Year:** 2023

Does this biopic of the legendary WWII photographer focus on the truth?

A

VERDICT: It trims some edges, but the core facts are all here

01 We're introduced to Elizabeth 'Lee' Miller (Winslet) lounging in France as a former model turned photographer. This is accurate to her pre-war career. What we don't see is that she apprenticed with photographer Man Ray, for whom she had posed.

02 Miller begins a relationship with Roland Penrose (Skarsgård) in France and moves to England with him. This is accurate, although what the film ignores is that she was married to Aziz Eloui Bey at the time and didn't divorce him until 1947 to marry Penrose.

03 As seen in the film, Miller was embedded with US troops following the D-Day landings. She was indeed the first reporter to capture the use of napalm and among the first to document the Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps.

04 Miller sets up a photo of herself taking a bath in Hitler's Munich home (captured by the Americans) with her boots, muddy from the death camps, on the bath mat. This really happened, coincidentally on the same day that Hitler shot himself in Berlin.

05 The film suggests that after the war Miller struggled with PTSD and addiction, which appears to be accurate. As the film reveals, she didn't tell her son about any of her wartime experiences. He only discovered her records and photos after she died.

Main image: © Alamy
Inset images: © Sky UK Ltd

Did you know?

In 1943 an up-and-coming young actor called Sidney Poitier had a job washing dishes at Arnold Reuben's restaurant in Manhattan.

Ingredients

- 5 large eggs
- 240g sour cream
- 900g cream cheese
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 240g sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Juice of 1 lemon

For the crust

- 10 Graham Crackers
- 60g unsalted butter (melted)
- 1.5 tbsp sugar
- Pinch of salt

NEW YORK CHEESECAKE

THE FAVOURITE DESSERT OF THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS, NEW YORK, 1928

This style of cheesecake is believed to have been created by Arnold Reuben, a chef and restaurateur who ran Reuben's Restaurant and Delicatessen in Manhattan. In 1928, after being served a cheese pie that he didn't like at a party, he began to experiment with a recipe of his own, hitting upon the idea of replacing cottage cheese with cream cheese. His creation was added to the menu of his restaurant and it quickly became a favourite with the customers. In the following decades, Reuben's New York-style cheesecake spread beyond the Big Apple and became a quintessential American desert, served in restaurants across the country.

METHOD

01 Preheat the oven to 180°C (gas mark 4). Place the crackers in a food processor or use a pestle and mortar until they are a fine crumb. Mix the melted butter with the crumbs, sugar and salt, then spread out onto the bottom of a well-greased pie tin. Bake for 10 minutes.

02 Blend the eggs and sour cream. Beat the cream cheese separately until smooth and then add to the egg and sour cream mixture. Mix thoroughly.

03 Add the flour, sugar, vanilla extract, lemon juice and zest and beat again until smooth.

04 When the batter is smooth, pour into the prepared cake tin on top of the already partially baked crust.

05 Place the cheesecake tin into a large roasting tray. Pour boiling water into the tray so it's about half-way up the sides of the cake dish. Do not overfill.

06 Place in the oven and bake for around 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours, until visibly set. Remove the roasting tin and allow the cheesecake to cool for around 40 minutes.

07 Once cool, place in the refrigerator and allow to chill before serving.

Main image: © Alamy
Inset image: © Getty Images

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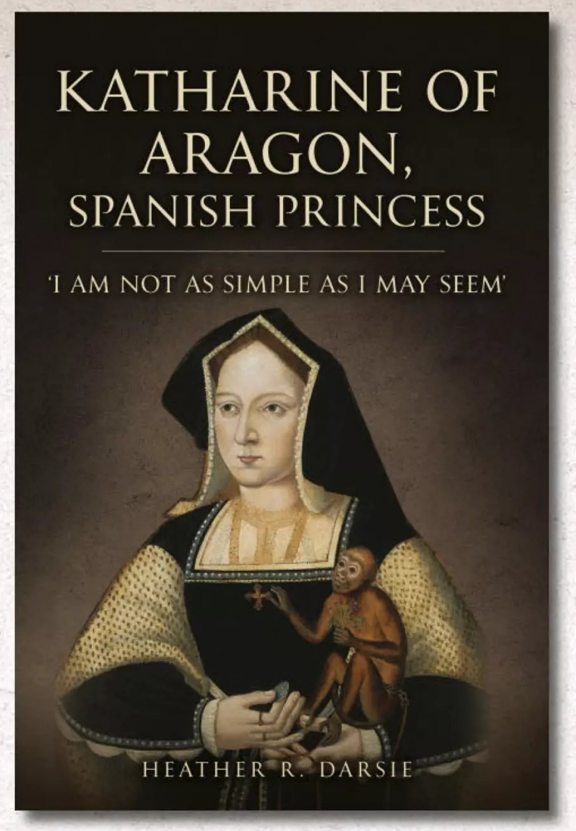
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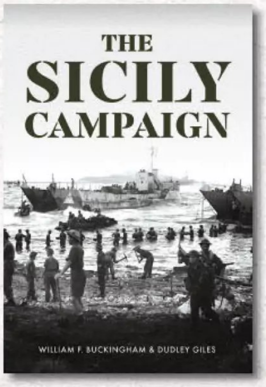
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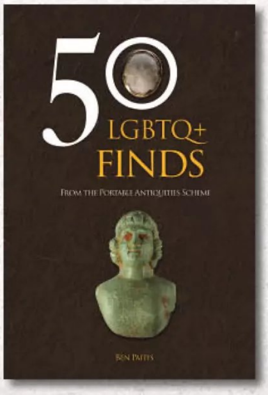
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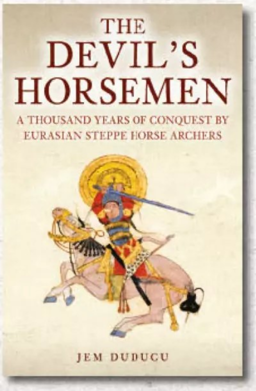
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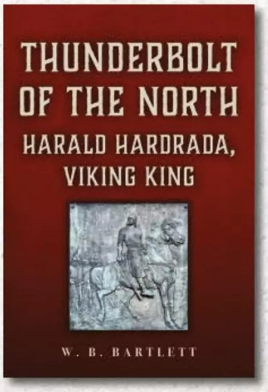
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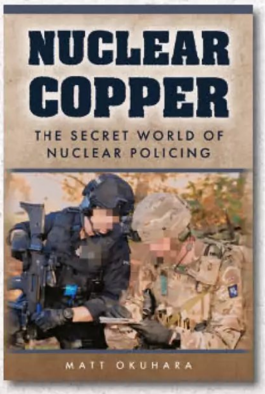
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